

**THE SAINTS AND SHRINES
OF
CHITTAGONG**

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Abstract

Chapter I is introductory. It deals with the aims and objects of the thesis, evaluates the existing works on the subject and discusses the sources utilised. The author collected materials by personal visits to various shrines included in the study. The available written materials have also been consulted.

Chapter II gives a brief outline of the growth of Sufism in Islam and the influence of early Ṣūfīs on the Muslim Society of Bengal.

Chapter III to VII deal with the Ṣūfīs of Chittagong from the earliest time to the present century. Chapter III deals with the early Sufis of Chittagong, those belonging to the group of Sufis known as Bāra Auliayā. Popular beliefs about the Bāra Auliayā have been examined and some misconceptions have been corrected. Bāra Auliayā have been associated with the first Muslim conquest of Chittagong. The historicity of the events have been examined in the light of historical and literary evidence.

Chapter IV deals with the Ṣūfīs of the 15th & 16th Centuries. In this chapter two very prominent Ṣūfīs, Shah Bayazid and Shalkh Farid have been discussed. Opinions of previous scholars about their chronology and identity have been re-examined and the popular beliefs about them have been rationalised.

Chapter V deals with the Ṣūfīs of the 17th Century. Of the Ṣūfīs dealt - with in this Chapter, two are very prominent - Shah Gharib

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-Allāh and Shāh Miskīn. The Chronology about both of them have been corrected with the help of reliable sources, at least one of which has been brought to light for the first time.

Chapter VI deals with the Ṣūfīs of the 18th and 19th centuries. The former misconceptions about majority of them, particularly Shāh Amānat, Shafī Shāh and Badna Shāh have been removed with the help of newly discovered historical and epigraphical evidence. The life-sketch of the great ^{but} and little known Ṣūfī Nūr Muḥammad has been discussed in the proper perspective.

Chapter VII deals with the Ṣūfīs of the present century. Various written materials are available about some of them particularly the great Saints of Māizbhāndār. These materials, generally mixed up with popular sentiments have been subjected to scrutiny and the facts have been put in proper perspective. About some others, investigations have been made personally on the spot and the results have been put in black and white for the first time.

Chapter VIII Sums up in brief the conclusions. A few words have been said about the influence of Ṣūfīs of Chittagang on the Society.

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I have utilised the Library of the Chittagong University, the Chittagong Collectorate library. The Librarian and the staff of the Chittagong University library and the staff of Chittagong Collectorate library were very cordial to me. The Deputy Commissioner, Chittagong kindly allowed me to take a Photo copy of Farman of Aurangzib. I am grateful to all of them.

Notes on transliteration

The following system has been used :-

i). For Arabic & Persian letters :-

ا =	a	س =	s
ب =	b	ض =	dh
پ =	p	ط =	t
ت =	t	ظ =	z
ث =	<u>th</u>	ع =	ʿ
ج =	j	غ =	gh
چ =	ch	ف =	f
ح =	h	ق =	q
خ =	<u>kh</u>	ك =	k
د =	d	گ =	g
ذ =	<u>dh</u>	ل =	l
ر =	r	م =	m
ز =	z	ن =	n
ژ =	zh	و =	w
س =	s	ح =	h
ش =	<u>sh</u>	ع =	ʿ
		ی =	y

Short vowels	-	a, i, u
Long vowels	-	ā, ī, ū
Diphthong	-	ay, ay.

ii). For Bengali letters:

অ	=	a
আ	=	ā
ই	=	i
ঈ	=	ī
উ	=	u
ঊ	=	ū
ঋ	=	ri
এ	=	e
চ	=	ch
ছ	=	chh
জ	=	j
ঝ	=	jh
ঞ	=	ñ
ট	=	t
ঠ	=	th
ড	=	d
ঢ	=	dh
ণ	=	n
ত	=	t
থ	=	th
দ	=	d
ধ	=	dh
ন	=	n
প	=	p
ফ	=	ph

ঐ	=	ai
ঔ	=	o
ক	=	au
খ	=	k
গ	=	kh
ঘ	=	g
ঙ	=	gh
ব	=	n
ভ	=	b
ষ	=	bh
ম	=	m
য	=	y
র	=	r
ল	=	l
ব	=	v
শ	=	s
ষ	=	sh
স	=	s
হ	=	h
ড়	=	r
য়	=	y
ং	=	m
ঃ	=	h
্	=	n

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Abbreviations

D.L.R	:	<u>Dhaka Law Reports</u> , Reports of Judgements of the High Court of Judicature, Dhaka.
J.A.S.B	:	<u>Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal</u> , Calcutta.
J.A.S.P.	:	<u>Journal of the Asiatic Society of the Pakistan</u> , Dhaka.
R.A	:	<u>Rahmat Allah Alaih.</u>
S	:	<u>Salla! Allahu Alaih-i-wa-sallam.</u>

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CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTION

The district of Chittagong¹ is situated between 2035' latitude and 2259' east longitude. It is comprising of an area of 2705 sq. miles and contains a population of forty three lakh fifteen thousand and four hundred sixty².

The district is bounded on the west by the Bay of Bengal, on the north-west by the Feni-river, which divides it from the district of Noakhali (at present Feni district), on the east by the Chittagong Hill tracts and Arakan and on the south by Arakan from which it is separated by the Naf estuary. Its length is 166 miles and its average breadth is about 15 miles. The breadth along the northern boundary is 30 miles and along its southern extremity near Teknaf only 4 miles. The district consists of a long narrow strip of coast, valleys and low ranges of hills. The most important rivers are Karnaphuli, Sangu, Matamuhuri, Bagkhali and Halda. Besides there are two rivers Feni, in the northern front and Naf on the southern limit of the district. In early times the sea was near the hills in the Nizampur Pargana and used to pass by the side of the Fairy Hills on the northern bank and Deang Hills on the southern bank of Karnaphuli³.

The city of Chittagong is one of the most picturesque in Bangladesh with its varied scenery of river, sea, hills and tropical vegetation. "The town" wrote Hooker, "is large and beautifully situated,

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1. By Chittagong, the greater Chittagong district, i.e. before the reorganisation of the districts in 1983-84 is meant.
 2. According to 1974 census.
 3. Syed Murtaza Ali : History of Chittagong, Dhaka, pp. 2-4.

interspersed with trees and tanks. The views are beautiful to blue mountains 40 to 50 miles distant, and the armed river, covered with sails, winding-amongst groves of coconuts, areca, palm and yellow rice fields".¹

Chittagong named Fathābād in the early Muslim period² and Islāmābād in the reign of Aurangzib,³ is one of those places in Bengal which played a very important role in her past history. Chittagong had never the good fortune of being the capital of Bengal and does not fall in line with Gaud, Pandua, Dhaka or Murshidabad as such, but her proximity to the sea and her anchorage to ships gave her a unique position as a port and influenced the course of her history. The sea-port of Chittagong attracted the traders from all Asiatic countries and even from Europe, all of whom left a mark of their culture on Chittagong's history. But the influence of the Arab traders was the most prominent and may be felt by the keen observers even to-day. Chittagong is probably the same as Samandar,⁴ about the commercial prosperity of which city the earlier Arab-Geographers speak so eloquently. However, the exact date of coming of the Muslims to Chittagong cannot be determined, because Chittagong was an old sea-port from the early period and hence the traders had a link with this port city also from very early times even before the advent of Islam in Arabia. Chittagong was the greatest

1. Sir John Hooker in the Himalayan Journal, quoted by, Syed Murtaza Ali, History of Chittagong, p.3.
2. Hamid Allah Khan; Akhādith al-Khawānīn, Calcutta, 1871, p.8
3. Rind al-Salātin tr.by Abdus Salam, Idārah-i-Adabiyat-i-Delhi Reprint, 1975, p.231, note.
4. For identification of Samandar with Chittagong see 'Samandar' of the Arab Geographers' in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, vol.VIII, No.2, December, 1963, pp13-24.

port of eastern India, compared to the ports of Saptagram or Hugli or Tamluk or Pipili. The Ports of Hugli and Calcutta were established much-later in history, ^{the former in the Mughal and the latter} in the British period. In these days the Arabs were very much active in sea-trade, they even monopolised trade and commerce in the east. The Asiatic sea route was not then known to the Europeans. Therefore, the European traders also used to purchase the Asiatic commodities through the Arabs. After the advent of Islam in Arabia, the Muslims also followed the footprints of their fore-fathers in trade and commerce and these Muslim Arab merchants also made contact with the Port of Chittagong. As the Arab traders were predominant in their maritime activities, it devolved upon the Arab scholars, particularly the Geographers to collect information about various aspects of trade so as to help the traders with requisite knowledge and data to facilitate their trading activities. Thanks to the labour of these Geographers that we learn to-day about the Arab contact with coastal regions of Bengal and more particularly with Chittagong, its chief-sea-port. Amongst these Arab Geographers the name of Sulaiman comes to the fore front. He is probably the first amongst the Geographers, who in his book Silsilat al-Tawārikh, written approximately in A.D.851 threw light on the Asian coastal ports and on commercial subjects.¹ After Sulaiman, Ibn Khurdābih (A.D.912) in his book Kitāb al-Masālik al-Mamālik discussed the trade route from Arabia to China.² Al-Idrīsī (born in A.D.1160) and Al-Masūdī (d.956) also narrated the trade-routes but they based their narratives chiefly on Ibn Khurdābih.³

1. Elliot and Dewson : History of India as told by its own historians, vol.I, p.2

2. Ibid., pp. 16-90.

3. Ibid.,

Sulaiman in his book 'Silsilat-al-Tawārikh' has given description of a place named 'Ruhmī' which has been identified by scholars with Bengal.¹

Ibn Khurdādhbih and others have given a list and description of coastal port towns and trade centres and discussed other important matters connected with trade like availability of goods and commodities and their price. In the list of trade centres, the Geographers mention a place named 'Samandar' which has been identified by Dr.A.Karim with Chittagong.² In the family history of the Arkanese kings Redjātā it is recorded that during the reign of the Arkanese King ^{Mahat-y-ny Chandrayat} (788-810 A.D.), some 'Kula' i.e. foreign ships were damaged and the Muslim-sailors of the ship were sent to Arakan, and there they settled permanently in the villages.³ This is a good proof to show that the Arab Traders were in contact with the coastal areas of the Bay of Bengal. If the Arab traders had trade contact with the Arakanese coast, then of course, the Port of Chittagong was not excluded. In another tradition, it is said that in A.D.953 the Arakan King Tsu-La-Taing-Tsandra was out to conquer 'Suratan' and he raised there a memorial of victory.⁴ Some scholars take the word 'Suratan' to be an Arakanese version of Sultān and on the basis of this word, they believe, that the Arabs had established in Chittagong, a Muslim Kingdom.⁵ There is no doubt that the Arabs had trade contact with the Chittagong Port but it is probably

1. Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, Vol.I, pp.184-202.
2. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, vol.VIII, no.2, 1963, pp.13-24.
3. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1844, p.36.
4. Ibid.
5. Abdul Karim and Enamul Huq: Arākan Rājsabhāya Bāngālā Shāhitya, p.4.

too much to say that the Arab Muslims had established a Muslim Kingdom in Chittagong. Only a word 'Suratan' the meaning of which has not been clear, does not justify to make such a conjecture. Secondly, on a careful scrutiny of the Arakanese tradition it seems more probable that the word 'Suratan' stands for a place and not for a Sultān. In the above discussion it has been clear that the Arab Muslim traders had contact with Chittagong from the 8th/9th century A.D. This contact continued during the later period also. Though the Arab merchants do not seem to have established any independent state in Chittagong, we find a great influence of the Arabs in the Culture of Chittagong. This was, obviously, due to their long contact with Chittagong and her people. In Chittagonian language, Arabic words are found in abundance. Many Chittagonian families claim their origin from the Arabs. In Chittagong, there is more than one Qadam Rasūl, i.e. buildings containing the stone-representations of the foot-prints (of the Prophet).¹ Many of the Chittagonian people resemble those of the Arabs in their facial complexion. Beside these, there are some areas in Chittagong viz. Al-Qaran (القرن), Sulūk Bahr (سلوك بحر), Bākaliā (بكالية) etc. that bear Arabic names. Some scholars, as has been said earlier,² think that the name Chittagong (or Chatgāon or Shatgaon) is derived from the Arabic word Shat (Delta) and (Gang) the Ganges. Traditions differ about the origin of the name of Chittagong. One tradition connects the name with an expression of an Arakanese King Tsu-La-Ting-Tsandra, who conquered Chittagong (in 953 A.D.) and built a stone

1. Viz: Qadam Rasūl of Chittagong City, the Mosque of Bagicha hat at Patiya and Qadam Rasūl village of Banskhalī Upazila.

2. Infra, p. 6.

trophy in memorial, with the words 'Tsit-ta-gung' (there shall be no war), 'Tsit-ta-gung' which means to make war is improper.¹ From Tsit-ta-gung, the name came to be Chatgāon for which the anglicised form is Chittagong. According to another tradition the original name of Chittagong is Chatgāon, and the name originated from the 'Chāti' or lamp of the saint Badar Shāh. It is said that the region was infested with fairies and demons so that human habitation was not possible. Badar Shāh on his arrival at Chittagong asked permission of the fairies and demons for lighting a 'Chāti' or lamp. Permission was given and when the 'Chāti' was lighted, its flame began to spread and it became impossible for the fairies and demons to live within sight of the flame. It is in this way that the area was inhabited by the people and Badar Shāh became the guardian saint of Chittagong. From his 'Chāti', the place came to be known as Chātigāon, Chāti meaning lamp and gāon meaning habitation. A hillock in the city of Chittagong is still known as 'Chāti Pāhād' and people believe that this was the place where Badar Shāh lighted his 'Chāti'. Badar Shāh lies buried not far away from the 'Chāti Pāhād' in the area called Badar Pati or Badar Patti named after the saint.² There is still a third account which connects the name with the influence of the Arab traders. According to this, the name is derived from the Arabic word 'Shat' and the name of the river Gang.³ 'Shat' means delta and 'gong' is the Ganges, thus meaning the delta of the Ganges.

1. Bangladesh District Gazetters, Chittagong, Dhaka 1975, P.60.
2. Bangladesh District Gazetters, Chittagong, Dhaka 1975, P.10, S.M.Ali, History of Chittagong, Dhaka, 1964, 'Chāti' is neither an Arabic nor Persian word. It seems to be a local word.
3. Bangladesh District Gazetters, Chittagong, Dhaka 1975, p.2.

In the early records the name is written variously as follows:

Ibn Battūṭah writes Sadkāwān;¹ on the coins of Ghiāth al-Dīn Āzam Shāh and Jalāl al-Dīn-Muḥammad Shāh it is Chatkāon (چٹکان),² in the coins of Danuj Marddana Deva and Mohendra Deva it is Chātigrama;³ in the letters of Shaikh Muzaḥfar Shams Balkhī to Sultān Ghiāth al-Dīn Āzam Shāh it is Chatgāon⁴, in the map of De Barros (1550), it is Chatigān;⁵ the Turkish Admiral Sīdī Al-Reis writes Shātijām;⁶ in the map of Van Den Brouck (1660) it is Xetiga⁷ and in the Vaishava literature it is Chātigram. So in almost all these sources, the name is prefixed by 'Chāti'; Ibn Battūṭah also must have arabicized the name Chatgāon into Sudkāwān, because there is no چ and گ in Arabic, which Ibn Battūṭah changed by the nearest pronounced letter س and ک. Moreover, all the records mentioned above are later to the advent of the saint Badar Shāh. So it seems very probable that the tradition connecting the name with Badar Shāh's 'Chāti' regarding the origin of the name of Chittagong is more acceptable.

Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī conquered Nadia in the beginning of the 13th Century A.D.⁸ Soon after, he shifted ~~his~~ to Gaud, renamed

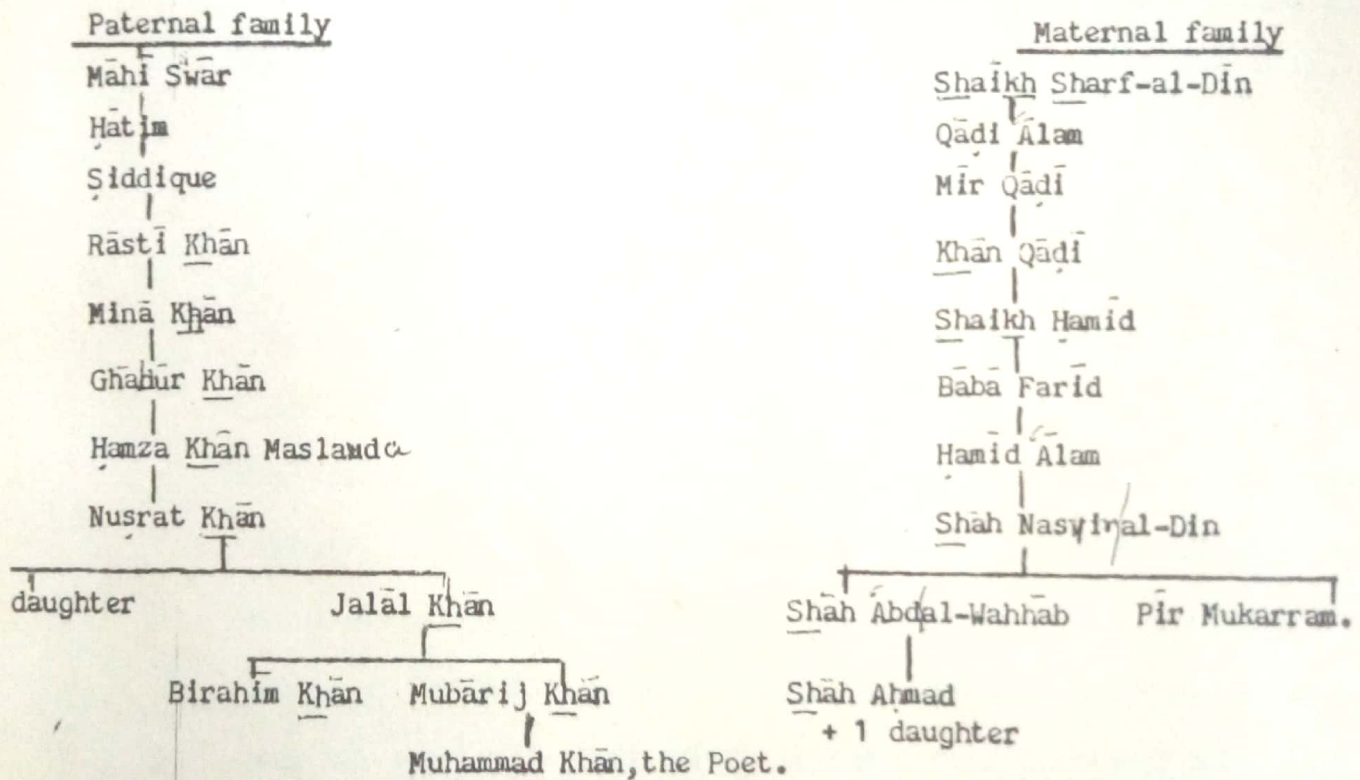
1. H.A.R.Gibb: Ibn Battuta : Travels in Asia and 'Africa, p.268.
2. N.K.Bhattacharya: Coins and Chronology of the Early Independent Sultans of Bengal, Cambridge 1922, p.78.
3. A.Karim; Corpus of the Muslim Coins of Bengal, pp.161-162.
4. Journal of the Bihar Research Society, vol.XLII, Part-II, 1956, p.13.
5. The map of De Barros in Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, vol.VIII, no.2, p.16.
6. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, vol.XVII, 1971, pp.233-234.
7. The Map of Van Den Bruck in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, vol.VIII, no.2, p.17.
8. J.N.Sarkar ed. History of Bengal, vol.II, D.U.1948, p.4.

It Lakhnauti where he established his capital.¹ This was the beginning of the Muslim rule in Bengal. But Chittagong was conquered by the Muslims about one and a half century later. It was Sultān Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh of Sunārgāon (1338-1349 A.D.) who, among the Muslim Sultāns of Bengal, is considered to be the first conqueror of Chittagong. From this time onward, Chittagong became a part and parcel of the Muslim Kingdom of Bengal, though occasionally, it passed to the hands of the Kings of Arakan and Tippera. Contemporary accounts giving the history of the first conquest of Chittagong are nowhere available now. There are two such records both dating from the 17th century. One is that of Shihāb al-Dīn Tālīsh, the author of the Fathī-yā-i-Ibariyā or Tārīkh-i-Ashām, and the other of Muhammad Khān, the author of the Bengali poem Maqtul Husain. The latter giving his ancestry unknowingly refers to the subject. According to Shihāb al-Dīn Tālīsh, Sultān Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh conquered Chittagong and built many mosques and mazārs of Sufīs there. He also built a Shāhī road connecting Chittagong with Sunārgāon. Shihāb al-Dīn Tālīsh himself saw the mosques and mazārs built by Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh.² The account of the poet Muhammad Khān is much lengthier. As told above, he was not writing the history of the conquest of Chittagong by the Muslims, but he was describing his ancestry, the glorious past of his family. He says, that his ancestor was an Arab, Māhī Sawār by name, Māhī sawār, accompanied by Hājī Khalīl Pīr, started from Arabia by sea and reached Chittagong.

1. Minhaj-i-Siraj : Tabaqat-i-Nasiri, Lahore edition, P.64.

2. J.N.Sarkar : Studies in Mughal India, p.122.

When they reached Chittagong, they were met or received by Kadal (Qadal) Khān Ghāzī Pīr and Badar Ālam. Kadal (Qadal) Khān Ghāzī Pīr, alongwith his twelve saintly friends conquered Chittagong from the hands of the non-Muslims. There in Chittagong Māhīṣawār married a Brahmin girl and by this marriage he was blessed with children. Muhammad Khān belonged to this family; many of his ancestors played significant role in the political and cultural history of Chittagong.¹ For the sake of convenience we give below Muhammad Khān's family tree both from his father's and mother's side :-



While according to Shihāb al-Dīn Tālīsh, Sultān Fakhr-al-Dīn Mubārak-Shāh of Sonārgāon conquered Chittagong and brought it under the Muslim rule; according to Muhammad Khān, Kadal Khān Ghāzī Pīr conquered Chittagong with the help of twelve Auliya. This apparant contradiction,

1. Sahitya Patrika, Part-I, 1366 B.S., pp.101-603, Part-II, 1369 B.S. pp.210-211; A.Karim : Chattagrāme Islām, pp.22-33.

however, does not really appear to be so, on close examination of the two sources. In the history of the spread of Islam and expansion of Muslim rule in Bengal, we notice that in most of the outlying areas, the Muslims penetrated in close co-operation and collaboration of the Sufis with the rulers. Thus Shāh Ṣafī' al-Dīn collaborated with Zafar Khān Ghāzī in the conquest of Satgaon or Triveni area in South-West Bengal,¹ Shāh Jalāl with his 360 and odd number of followers collaborated with Sikandar Khān Ghāzī, the General of Sultān Shams al-Dīn Firūz Shāh in the conquest of Sylhet.² In the tradition current in Chittagong, Kadal Khān Ghāzī Pīr is said to have been a general of Fakhr al-Dīn Mubarak Shāh.

Although Muslims established their political power in Lakhnautī in the beginning of the 13th century, for about one hundred years after its existence, the Muslim political powers could not penetrate deep into the interior or in the outlying areas. But with the establishment of Independent Sultanate in the middle of the 14th century, Muslims not only conquered the outlying areas, but brought the whole of Bengal under their rule. The fourteenth century saw the coming of the Muslim Ṣūfīs to Bengal in larger number and they spread over the country in their missionary and proselytising activities. It may be that in so doing they came into clash with the local non-Muslims. In such a situation, the Muslim rulers could not remain a silent spectators. They invariably came to the aid of the Ṣūfīs.

1. Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, vol.IV, 1956, pp.198-202, History of Bengal, vol.II, p.87.

2. Shams-ud-din Ahmed: Inscriptions of Bengal, vol.IV, p.24.

In this way, the collaboration of the Ṣūfīs with the rulers took place and several parts of the country came under the Muslim domination as has been stated before. Chittagong also probably came under the Muslims in similar manner. Chittagong was conquered when Shāh Jalāl was still living in Sylhet (he died in A.D.1347 as known from Ibn Batṭūṭah,¹) but it is not known whether he had played any role in the conquest of Chittagong. According to Ibn Batṭūṭah, Sultān Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh was very fond of Faqīrs and "Government orders that no passage money should be taken on the journey from Darwishes, and that provisions were to be supplied to those of them who had none and when a Darwish comes to a town, he is to be given a dinar²". It seems, therefore, very probable that Chittagong was conquered by Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh's general in collaboration with the Ṣūfīs called Bāra Auliya by Muḥammad Khān led by Qadal Khān Ghāzī and Badar Alam. Whether Qadal Khān Ghāzī was a general of the Sultān or he was a Ṣūfī is not definitely known; Muḥammad Khān however, makes him a Ṣūfī primarily and his testimony seems to be correct. According to tradition also Badar Shāh is considered to be the conqueror of Chittagong, i.e. the credit is given to the Ṣūfīs and not to the generals.

Chittagong thus conquered by the Muslims in the middle of the 14th century, remained in the hands of the Muslims for about two centuries without any break. There are undoubted evidence of Muslim rule in Chittagong through out this period as has been observed by Dr. A. Karim.³

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1. A. Karim : Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, p.97.
 2. H.A.R. Gibb: Ibn Batuttah, Travels in Asia and Africa, p.271.
 3. A. Karim : Chattagrāme Islam, pp.39-42.

During the reign of Ālā' al-Dīn Husain Shāh, Chittagong became a bone of contention amongst three powers --- Bengal Sultān, King of Tippera, and the King of Arakan, but ultimately Chittagong came to the possession of the Bengal Sultān. It remained under the Muslims during the reign of Ghiāth al-Dīn Mahmūd Shāh and also probably under Sher Shāh Sūr. But during the Chaotic conditions following the fall of the Sūr Sultanate of Delhi and with the restoration of the Mughals in Delhi, Chittagong again passed from the hands of the Muslims and went to the possession of Arakan. From the Arakanese, Chittagong was finally conquered by the Mughals, under Shāista-Khān in 1666 A.D. Since then, till the ceding of Chittagong to the East India Company¹ by Mīr Qāsim in 1760, Chittagong remained in the hands of the Muslims.

But whatever may be the fortune of Chittagong in the political front, the influence of the Sūfis continued unabated althrough till the present day. Numerous Sūfis are lying buried in the city and in the villages and their dargahs are daily visited by the people in hundreds, nay in some cases in thousands. Chittagong has truly become a land of Auliya, the land of Bara Auliya in the mouth of the general people.

It is clear from the above ^{discussion} ~~decision~~ that the Sūfis played a very important part not only in the conquest of Chittagong but also in spreading Islam in the region. This is also the case in the whole of Bengal, and Dr. Karim in his Social History of the Muslims of Bengal² clearly demonstrated the role of Sūfis in building up Muslim society

1. For details see Ibid., pp.43-57.

2. Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dhaka, 1959.

and spreading Islamic Culture in Bengal. He has shown that the Mosque, Madrasah and the Khānqah were the three pillars on which the foundation of Muslim society was built up. The same observation of Dr. Karim also applies to Chittagong where Mosque, Madrasah and Khānqah are abundantly found and even to-day Islamic spirit predominates in Chittagong. The population of Chittagong is also predominantly Muslims, in 1974 census, more than 85% population are Muslims. The Saints and Shrines of Chittagong is therefore a fascinating study; study of the lives and teachings of Sufis are important, but the study of their influence on society is more important. But unfortunately the lives and activities of the Sufis of Chittagong have not received attention from scholars as it deserves. Not to speak of Chittagong, the Sufis of Bengal also have not received as much attention as those of Northern India and elsewhere of the Muslim world. The only detailed study is that of the late Dr. Muhammad Enamul Haq who did his Ph.D. on the History of the Sufism in Bengal as early as 1934. An abridged Bengali version of his thesis was published in 1935 under the title Bange Sufi Prabhava.¹ Recently his original thesis has also been published, under the title 'A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal'.² In this book a few of the early Sufis of Chittagong have been included, but the author has relied mainly on the traditions about them. Admittedly Dr. Haq's study has been handicapped due to lack of source-materials, but even so, Dr. Haq has failed to place some of the early Sufis in proper perspective. The chief defect lies in the fact that Dr. Haq tried to identify important

1. Calcutta, 1935.

2. Published by the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka, in 1975.

Sūfīs like Badar ^ʿAlam or Badar Shāh and Shāikh Farīd of Chittagong with their famous namesakes in Northern India. By so doing the learned scholar has barred the possibility of having more than one Sūfī bearing the same name. By such identification Dr. Huq has also fallen in chronological errors. Again, Dr. Huq has limited his study to the Sūfīs of Chittagong of the early period. The Sūfīs of the later period whose influence in the Muslim society may be felt even to-day, have not been included in his book. The study, inspite of its great merit, was therefore, partial and limited in scope. Dr. Abdul Karim in his Social History of the Muslims in Bengal¹ has also dealt with some famous Sūfīs of Bengal. Since his main theme was to show the growth of Muslim Society and the role of Sūfīs in that direction, his study has been a selective one. The Sūfīs of Chittagong except only a few, have not therefore, drawn his attention. Dr. Karim later studied some prominent Sūfīs of Chittagong in his book Chattagrāme Islām.² Though in his book he made a detailed study of some of the early and later Sūfīs, the study is by no means exhaustive. One must necessarily be selective in such studies, but unfortunately the selection in this book has been extremely limited. Moreover, Sūfīs, particularly those of the Tarīqat-i-Muhammadiya, and those of Māiz Bhāndār Sharīf, Sūfīs, who are still tremendously popular did not find place in Dr. Karim's study. When the situation is such, a study of the Saints and Shrines of Chittagong, the subject matter of this present study need hardly be emphasized.

1. Published by the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, in 1959.

2. Published by the Islamic Cultural Centre, Chittagong in 1970 and in 1980.

There is also a personal pre-dilection, in selecting the present subject of study. I myself, being the son of a learned Maulvī, and as being trained in Arabic and Islamic Studies, have got a traditional family attachment to some very prominent contemporary Sūfīs. During my student career in the Madrasah, I chanced to be brought up in the Sūfī environment; Sūfī Walī Ahmad about whom has been discussed in the following pages, used to live in the vicinity of my residence and I was a constant welcome attendant in his Khānqah. My attachment to him and his affection towards me was so great that he called me 'Nati' (grand son), though there was no blood relationship. In those days I could hardly understand the intricacies of the Sūfī Tārīqah, but the activities in the Khānqah, his attitude towards the visitors and the visitors' attitude towards him, all left an indelible mark in my impressionable adolescent mind. Later, I came to close contact with Shāh Faḍlul-Karīm, who also roused in me an inquisitive spirit about Sūfī-ism. I came in contact with many other Sūfīs, e.g. Shāh Walī al-Rahman, Shāh Mawlānā Mīr Muḥammad Akhtār, Ḥāfiz Shāh Munīr al-Dīn, Shāh Ghulām al-Rahmān (Bada Ḥāfiz Sāhib) and Sūfī Abdu^{al-}Wadūd etc. who were living in Chittagong. I am also a regular visitor to the Khānqahs of living saints both in Chittagong and outside. In Chittagong, of those who deserve mention, one is Shāh Muīz Ahmad Mirzā of Lucknow, now living in Halishahar, Chittagong. He is popularly known as Ḥāfiz Sāhib. He is the direct descendant of Maulānā Faḍlul-Rahmān Ganj-i-Murādabādī of Lucknow. Others are the Maulānā Shāh Abdu^{al-}Jabbar, the Pīr Sāhib of

Baitush-Sharaf and Hāfiz Shāh Abd al-Bārī of Bahar Signal, Kalurghat, Chittagong. These contacts also induced me to undertake the study about the saints and Shrines of Chittagong.

As has been stated above that the subject has not been studied by the previous writers due mainly to lack of materials. The two scholars who undertook the study also suffered from the same. The position is not better now. It needs hardly mention that such a study must be empirical in nature. I have visited the Mazārs and dargāhs of the Ṣūfīs about whom I have discussed. I have observed closely the mode Fāteha, Zīrārat and Urs ceremonies of the different Mazārs and also attended the simā and Raqs ceremony observed in some of them. I have also collected information about the Ṣūfīs from the 'Sajjādah-nashīns' or 'Gaddīnashīns' or the attending Khādīms, where 'Sajjādah-nashīns' are not available. For the last three years, I roamed from one Mazar to another, sometimes to inaccessible places, not having pucca road links and I devoted myself to the collecting of information. The study is based, however, not solely on empirical research. Fortunately for us, written materials are also available for making such a study. It is worthwhile to make a brief survey of the source materials available to us for this study. The early Sufis of Chittagong do not find place in the standard Tadhkira literature of Northern India, such as the Akhbār al-Akhyār of Shāikh Abd al-Huq Muḥaddith-i-Dehlawī or the Mirāt al-Asrār of Abd al-Rahmān Chishtī. They are also not mentioned in the Malfuzāt of great Chishtiyā Ṣūfīs like Fawā'id al-Fawād, i.e. the

collection of discourses of Shaikh Nizām al-dīn Auliya. Our chief sources of information of the early Sūfīs of Chittagong, particularly the Bara Auliya, is the traditional accounts handed down from generation to generation. But the tadhkira and malfūz literature mentioned above are also helpful not to know the life and activities of the early Sūfīs of Chittagong but to understand the Sūfī-ism and its practices and teachings. Sūfī-ism is an international movement, in it the Sūfīs are bound by rules of discipline called tarīqah or silsilāh or order of Sūfīs. The Tarīqah or Silsilāh in Sūfism were developed long before Sūfī-ism entered into Chittagong. So, the Sūfīs of Chittagong belonged to one or the other of the tarīqahs and to understand the lives and activities of Sūfīs of Chittagong, one must know the tarīqah rules. Therefore, the tadhkira and Malfūz literature have their own values, but as they do not throw any light directly on the Sūfīs of Chittagong, we do not enumerate the titles of this literature. There is, however, only one malfūz book produced in Bihar which discusses about Shāh Gharīb Allāh, a 17th century saint of Chittagong. It is Malfūz-i-Ruknī, a collection of discourses of Shaikh al-Islām ~~al-Islām~~ Hadrat 'Ain al-Dīn 'Abd al-Bārī, better known as Rukn al-Dīn Ahmad Shattārī, son of Muīn al-Dīn, son of Qutb al-Dīn Shattārī, son of Shāh 'Alā' al-Dīn. The discourses were compiled by one of his disciples, Pīr Imām al-Dīn Shattārī of Rajgir. The discourses compiled in this manuscript were delivered during the period from 1104-1117/A.D.1692-1705.¹

1. Photostat copy of the manuscript containing the malfūzāt is preserved in the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka.

In the Muslim period the Sultāns and the Mughal emperors and ~~Mughali~~ Mughal local officers used to grant lands for the subsistence of the famous Sūfīs. As the Sūfīs used to instruct persons in the Madrasahs and Khānqahs and as the Khānqahs centered round mosques, the land grants were also intended for the maintenance of those religious institutions. We have been fortunate to discover one such land grant issued to a famous Saint of Chittagong. This is a farman of the Mughal emperor Aurangzib issued to Shāh Miskīn. Shāh Miskīn is known to us through traditions and through his mazār which still exists, but the farman helps in determining his time.¹

Some good materials about the Sūfīs are available in Urdu and Bengali literature. The earliest book in this category is the Maqtul Husain of the poet Muhammad Khān discussed already. This is the earliest book in point of time in which the activities of the early Sūfīs of Chittagong have been discussed. Muhammad Muqīm, an early 19th century poet also discusses about the Sūfīs of Chittagong.² In course of describing the historical role of Chittagong, the poet gives the names of greatmen of Chittagong such as Sūfīs and poets. Though a later work, Muhammad Muqīm's book may be taken as corroborative evidence.

Hamīd Allāh Khān's Ahādith al-Khawānīn (or Tārīkh-i-Hamīdī, or Tārīkh-i-Chātgam)³ is a unique history of Chittagong as it is the earliest history of Chittagong, written in Persian language in the style of Chronicles. The book deals with the history of Chittagong,

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1. The farman is preserved in the Chittagong Collectorate, Photo copy attached.
 2. A Descriptive Catalogue of Bengali Manuscripts in Munshi Abdul Karim's collection by Munshi Abdul Karim and Ahmad Sharif, Eng. translation by S.S. Husain, Dhaka 1960; pp. 84-91. Bangla Academy Patrika, vol. 18, Baisakh-Ashadh, 1390; pp. 98-107.
 3. Published from Calcutta, 1871 A.D.

particularly from the Husain Shāhī period. This is also a book in which cultural landmarks in the history of Chittagong such as archaeological objects like old mosques and inscriptions, historic families, poets and literateures and Sufis have been discussed. In this book we get important discussions about the Shrine of Bayazid Bistāmī, and about Shāh Amānat, Shāh Shafī, Badna Shāh and Shāh-Sūfī Nūr Muhammad. The writer saw Shafī Shāh in his early days, Badna Shāh in his prime youth while the last named Sūfī i.e. Shāh Sūfī Nūr Muhammad was his preceptor or murshid. So the last named three sufis were contemporary of the writer and the writer has given first hand information about them.

Several books have been produced in the present century by different scholars in Bengali, Urdu and Persian languages, some covering the whole of Bengal or part thereof and some dealing with particular Sufis. Some of these books are of the type of Tadhkirah literature produced in Northern India in Persian language on the early Sufis of the Indian Sub-continent. The earliest of the series is probably the Tadhkira-i-Auliya-i-Bangala written in Persian by Maulvi Obaid al-Huq of Feni 'Alia Madrasah of former Noakhali district. This is a small book dealing with some early Sufis, but unfortunately the book is not easily available now. But fortunately, the same author has also produced a Bengali book on the same subject. This is a big volume covering the whole of Bengal and dealing with almost all known Sufis.¹ The Sufis of Chittagong have also been included in this book. Though

1. Maulānā Obaid al-Huq: Bangladesher Pir Auliya-gān, pub. from July, 1969.

the book is of Tadhkirah type, it embodies all sorts of information available through traditions and from other sources. This is an important book and deserves scrutiny on the basis of corroborative evidence.

A few booklets have recently been written on the life and Karamat of Shāh Aṁānat, one by late Maḥbūb al-ʿAlam and the other by Prof. Abdul Karim. They have based their studies mainly on the materials supplied by the Khādims of the dargāh. Fortunately we have been able to discover a Persian inscription¹ having bearing on the life of Shāh Aṁānat and a judgement of the Dhaka High Court² regarding the Waqf property of the Shāh Aṁānat's dargāh. Both these are of immense importance and throw fresh light on the life of the saint.

Of the other books Challish Auliyār Kāhinī (Facts about forty saints) has proved to be helpful.³ The author has discussed the life of forty saints of Bengal, of whom Sūfī Nūr Muḥammad is prominent. Sūfī Nūr Muḥammad's life and activities have also been discussed in the Āina-i-Waisī,⁴ an Urdu Tadhkirah book. Another book is Maulānā Ridwān al-Haq's Sūfī Nūr Muḥammad Saḥeber-Jibānī⁵ (Life of Sūfī Nūr Muḥammad).

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1. Photo copy attached, see plate, V, (a)
 2. D.L.R.16.A.D.1964.
 3. The book has been available from the Khādīm of the mazār of Shāh Sūfī Nūr Muḥammad. The book is printed, but some pages at the beginning and end have been lost. The portion discovered by me has got only 40 leaves, the portion containing discussions about Sūfī Nūr Muḥammad only. The name of the author is not known, but it seems that the book was printed in the early 20th century.
 4. Muḥammad Matī al-Raḥmān, Āina-i-Waisī, Patna in A.D.1976.
 5. Maulānā Ridwān al-Haq, Sūfī Nūr Muḥammad Saḥeber Jibānī, Pub, Chittagong in A.D.1963.

These books are not contemporary to the saint but they contain traditions about the saint which are still remembered by people having connections with the saint in some way or other. Particularly the last mentioned book has been proved to be very useful.

Several books have been written on the life and Karāmat of Shāh Ahmad Allāh and Shāh Ghulām al-Rahmān of Māizbhāndar Sharīf, and the founder of the Māizbhāndarī Tariqah. Of those the following three have been found useful. Jibani and Karāmat¹ (Life and miracles) embodies the life-sketch of Shāh Ahmad Allāh written by Shāh Dīlwar Hus̄sain, a grand son and Sajjādah-nashin of the saint. The writer was brought up and was given spiritual training by the saint himself, who also nominated him as his successor. So the writer has written from his personal knowledge and he also collected informations from numerous of the saint's disciples. It is to be noted that for each and every miracle discussed in the book, the writer has cited his source. The second book is the Wilāyat-i-Matlaqah² also written by Shah Dīlwar Hus̄sain. This is a book on Tasawwuf and explains the tariqah of Shāh Ahmad Allāh Māizbhāndarī. Similarly the Babā Bhāndarī³ written by Sayyid Badar al-duza deals with the life and miracles of Shāh Ghulām al-Rahmān.

The life and activities of Maulānā Shāh Dāmīr al-dīn has been discussed in the Tadhkirah-i-Dāmriyāh⁴ written by Maulānā Faīd Ahmad of

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1. Syed Dilwar Hus̄sain, Pub, Chittagong in A.D.1967 and 1972.
Shāh Dīlwar Hus̄sain died recently.
 2. Syed Dilwar Hus̄sain, Pub, Chittagong in A.D.1968.
 3. Syed Badar al-Duza, Pub, Chittagong, in B.S.1377.
 4. Maulānā Faīd Ahmad, pub, Chittagong in A.H.1377/A.D.1957.

Hathazari, Chittagong. This is a book in Urdu language and as the writer was the contemporary of the saint, his evidence is worthy of credit. 1. ... published.

Maulānā Shāh Walī Ahmād, the holder of the title of Bahr al-Ulūm (Ocean of knowledge) was himself a great writer and a poet. He wrote profusely anthologies of poetry in Arabic, Persian languages and some pieces of poetry in Bengali language also. The following books of the Maulānā have been published from India. The Gulzār-i-Ilm¹, is a book written in Persian language centering its theme on religious knowledge; the second is Nazam al-Aqāid², this is also written both in Arabic and Persian languages in a poetic style. This book deals with mainly on Aqāida, the third one is Makātib-i-Manzūm³, this book mainly deals with collection of letters addressed to different persons that help the students in seeking knowledge. The book is also written in Persian language. The fourth one is his Qasāid written in Arabic language which deals with eulogising his teachers, religious luminaries of both home and abroad in the form of qasidah.⁴

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1. Published and edited by Muhammad Saeed Ahmad from Barqi press, Delhi, A.H.1350/A.D.1931.
2. Published and edited by Abū al-Muzaffar Nādir al-Zamān, Barqi press, Delhi in A.H.1353/A.D.1934.
3. Published and edited by Abū al-Muzaffar Nādir al-Zamān from Deoband in A.H.1350/A.D.1931.
4. Published and edited by Abū al-Muzaffar Nādir al-Zamān from Barqi press, Delhi in A.H.1350/A.D.1931.

Maulānā Abd al-Latīf also wrote books, but mainly fatwās or legal decisions. Unfortunately his writings could not be traced. Due to differences among his descendants, none of them agree to part with their copies. But I have been able to collect the subject matters of his writings from their descendants.

There are hundreds of mazārs and dargāhs in Chittagong. All of them are not genuine. The discussion, therefore, has to be selective. In selection, I have tried to discuss about those saints who are more famous and whose influence on the society has been of lasting nature. The discussion on the living saints and Pirs has been purposely omitted to avoid misunderstanding.

Writing on the saints and their shrines of Chittagong is a difficult task, particularly because materials are scarce. While there is hardly any written materials for the early period, for the later period the materials are not so scarce. But it is difficult to discover the truth hidden in the debris of popular stories and writings of enthusiastic devotees. I have tried my best to sift the materials and to scrutinise the popular traditions and stories scientifically and the results have been embodied in the following pages.

CHAPTER - II

Coming of the Sūfīs to Bengal

Few aspects of Muslim religious life during the middle ages are of such absorbing interest as the origin and growth of the mystic ideology and institution. Mystic devotion, it may be noted, is not 'the sole prerogative of any race, language or nation'.¹ But the Sūfī movement in Islam has certain peculiar features of its own which make its study a necessary adjunct to a proper understanding of the history of medieval 'Ajam, including India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. 'It is all the more so because the movement of popular religion in Islam is very closely connected with the history of Sūfism in Islam'.² And further because it has been through the institution of Sūfī-ism alone that dynamic and progressive elements have entered the social structure of Islam. The orthodox theologians, often conservative and reactionary, hardly appreciated the change in the moods of the time and seldom tried to reconstruct their religious thoughts accordingly. The mystic thought has proved, in this sense, the protecting glacis of the Muslim society and has given it a new vitality by removing the contradictions between static theology and the rapidly changing conditions of life. 'Through the course of Islamic history', writes Professor Gibb, 'Islam's culture was challenged, but never overpowered, for the Sūfī and other mystical thought always came to the rescue of its most dogmatic preaching and always gave it that strength and power

1. Louis Massignon, as quoted by Lammens in Islam:- Belief and Institutions, P. 11.

2. K.A. Nizami: Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the 13th century, Aligarh 1961, p. 51.

which no challenge could destroy'.¹ Besides, unlike other mystic thoughts, the Sūfis (specially after the rise of the silsilahs) did not aim at merely personal salvation but worked for the spiritual culture of humanity as a whole.²

'That Taṣawwuf is essentially Islamic in its origin is as true as the fact that as the mystic movement spread to various regions it assimilated and imbibed elements from cultures and religions that were different from its own'.³ The Qurān is often allegorical with a mystic touch. It defines a Muslim in these words:

الَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ٥

'Those who believe in the Unseen, establish daily prayers and spend out of what we have given them'.⁴ Further as to the Unseen it says that it is your own soul. وَخُنِ اقْرَبَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ

'We are nearer to him (man) than his own juglar vain'.⁵

Again the assential nature of the Unseen is pure light :

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

'God is the light of the heavens and earth'.⁶ Out of these verses the Sūfis have developed their pantheistic views about the Reality behind all creation. The Sūfis say that the Prophet had an esoteric teaching as distinguished from the teaching contained in the

1. H.A.R.Gibb : Mohammadanism, p.128.

2. Islamic Culture, July 1942, p.264.

3. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami : Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the 13th century, pub, Allgarh University in A.D.1961, p.51.

4. S.II.2,

5. S.L.: 15,

6. S.XXVI: 35.

Book and cite the following verse in their support :

كما أرسلنا فيكم رسولا منكم يتلو عليكم آياتنا ويزكيكم ويؤمركم الكتاب والحكمة
ويعلمكم ما لم تكونوا تعلمون ٥

'As we have sent a Prophet to you from among yourselves who reads our verses to you, purifies you, teaches you the Book and the Wisdom, and teaches you what you did not know before'.¹

If by Sūfī-ism we mean interiorization in the rites of worship and a deep and restless devotion to Allah, to the exclusion of earthly ties, the germination of mystic spirit may be traced back to the days of the Prophet who himself used to retire to the Cave of Hira to meditate for a certain period of time every year. Some seventy persons-known as 'Ahle Suffa' lived in the mosque of the Prophet and prayed day and night during his life time. They had no earthly attachments and no worldly engagements. Besides, two companions of the Prophet - Abū Dhar Ghiffārī (d.652 A.D.) and Hudhifa (d: 657) who were known for their piety and other worldly outlook, set the traditions of mystic attitude in Islam. Broadly speaking there were three distinct stages in the growth of the mystic movement in Islam: (1) Period of Quietists, (2) period of the mystic Philosophers and (3) the period of Silsilahs. Persons dissatisfied with the conditions of the external world, retired into the seclusion and were far off from the worldly attachments. To them world was transitory and deceitful. They were terribly afraid of the world to come. Imām Hasan Baṣrī (d.728 A.D.), - Ibrāhīm bin Adham (d.777 A.D.), Abū-Ḥashim (d.777 A.D.) and Rabīa

1. S. II : 146.

Basrī (d.776 A.D.) belong to this Quietist school of Sūfī-ism.¹

In the last half of the 9th century, mystic sects (Garoh, Madhhab) appeared. They were concerned with the problem of mystic metaphysics. The founders of these sects were men of great learning and wisdom. Marūf Karkhī introduced the doctrine of total forgetfulness, while Sarī Saqtī (d.870 A.D.) that of Tawhīd (Oneness).² Dhunūn Misrī (d.859 A.D.) formulated the doctrine of 'ḥāl' (state) and muqām (stage). Maṣṣūr Hallāj (d.921 A.D.) introduced the pantheistic element in Islam. These doctrines formed the subject of large Arabic manuals that appeared in the succeeding centuries.³ After these doctrines appeared mystic Philosophers who consolidated the above doctrines along with other religious and mystic ideas into a consistent mystic philosophy.⁴ Imām Ghazzālī (d.1111 A.D.) was the second great scholar to write a systematic account of mysticism after Imām Qushairī (d.1074 A.D.). According to Ibn Khaldūn it was he who systematized Tasawwuf into science.⁵

In the 13th century, there appeared three great figures - Shaikh Muḥī al-dīn-Ibn-i-Arabī (d.1248 A.D.), Shaikh Shahāb al-dīn-Suhrawardī (1234 A.D.) and Maulānā Jalāl-al-dīn Rūmī (d.1273 A.D.) who consolidated the thought of their predecessors and gave to Sūfī-ism

1. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami : Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the thirteenth century, Allgarh, A.D.1961, p.53.

2. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami: Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India in the 13th century, p.54.

3. Ibid;

4. Ibid, p.55.

5. Cited by Shibli in al-Ghazzālī, p.187.

a consistent philosophy, a discipline and a warm fund of emotions. All three had met each other.¹

Ibn-i-'Arabī was the first amongst three figures whose works reached India very early. Maulānā Jalāl-^{al}-dīn Rūmī, the famous author of Mathnavī, popularised his pantheistic ideas through his warm and breathing verses. Shaikh Shahāb-al-dīn Suhrawardī wrote his 'Awārif-al-M'ārif which is a book of moderate and centrist mysticism and was, therefore, ^eradily accepted by the Ṣūfīs of all schools.

(Rise of the Silsilahs). The most important phase in the development of Islamic mysticism was, of course, the rise of silsilahs in the 12th century. Various silsilahs were developed, of which the following four came to India and achieved very great prominence. (a) The earliest mystic order was the Qādiriya Silsilah founded by Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir Jilānī (1077-1166 A.D.) one of the most outstanding figures in the annals of Islamic mysticism. His sermons, collected in Al-Fath-al-Rabbānī are, according to Prof. Margoliouth, 'Some of the very best in Moslem literature: the spirit which they breathe is one of Charity and Philanthropy'.²

(b). The Silsilah-i-Khwājgān comes next. It was founded by Khwāja Ahmad (d.1166 A.D.). Two centuries later, there appeared Khwāja Bah-^{al}-dīn Naqshbandī³ (d.1388 A.D.) who utilised the traditions of Khwāja Ahmad and built up the structure of Silsilah and hence his contribution towards the consolidation and expansion of the Silsilah-i-

1. Ibid.

2. For brief biographical account, see Nafhat-ul-Uws, p.420.

3. Akhbār-al-Akhyār, Shaikh Abdal-Huq, p.36.

Khwājān was so great that after his death the Silsilah came to be known as the Niqshbandī order after his name. (c). The other important mystic order was the Chishtia-Silsilah. It was founded in Chisht (a village near Herat) by Khwāja Abū Ishāq Shāmī (d.940 A.D.) but was destined to develop and flourish in India. Khwājah Muīn-^{al}-dīn Chishtī Ajmirī Sijzī brought it to India in the 12th Century and established a Chishtī mystic centre at Ajmir. Amongst his talented successors, Shaikh Qutb-al-dīn-Bakhtiyār Kākī, Shaikh-Farīd-al-dīn Ganj-i-Shakar and Shaikh Nizām-al-dīn Auliya, the Silsilah spread far and wide and many mystic centres were established from Ajodhan to Lakhnauti.¹

(d). Another spiritual order which flourished in India vis-a-vis to Chishtia order was the Suhrawardia Silsilah. It was founded by Shaikh Najib-^{al}-dīn Abd al-Qāhir Suhrawardī (d.1234 A.D.).² He sent many of his disciples to India³ but Shaikh Bahā-al-dīn ~~Dhakar~~ia alone succeeded in firmly establishing the Silsilah in India, particularly in Multan and Sind.

(e). One more Silsilah was brought to India called Shattari Silsilah by Shāh Abd-Allāh (d.1485 A.D.) during the Lodi period. It attained an ephemeral and short lived importance during the reign of the early Timurids.

Sūfī-ism in Bengal :- The Sūfī-ism in Bengal was not an indigenous growth; by the time Islam came to Bengal, the Sūfī tariqahs had attained great popularity. The Sūfī-ism was imported to Bengal from

1. K.A.Nizami: Op.cit, pp.174-75.

2. For his life see Tabaqat al-Kubra, Al-Subki, vol.IV, p.256.

3. For short history of Silsilah see Medieval India Quarterly, vol.I, Part-II.

the West, from Central Asia through Northern India. A large number of Sūfis came to Bengal; according to tradition, some of them came even before the Muslim conquest.¹ An idea of the influence of Sūfis in Bengal may be obtained from a letter written by Sayyid Ashraf Jahāngīr Simnānī to Sultān Ibrāhīm Sharqī of Jaunpur.² He writes, "God be praised ! What a good land is that of Bengal, where numerous saints and ascetics came from many directions and made it their habitation and home. For example at Devagaon seventy ^{leading} living disciples of the Shaikh of Shaikh ² Hadrat Shaikh Shihab-ud-din Suhrawardi are taking their eternal rest. Several saints of the ^{or} Suhrawardi order are lying buried in Mahisun and this is the case with the saints of Jalalia order in Deotala. In Narkoti some of the best companions of the Shaikh of Shaikh ^{Shaikh} Ahmad Damishqi are found. ² Hadrat Shaikh Sharfuddin Tawwama, one of the twelve of the Qadar Khani order whose ^{pupil} Chief ² ~~people~~ was Hadrat Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri is lying buried at Sonargaon. And then there was Hadrat Badar Alam and Badar Alam Zahidi. In short in the country of Bengal what to speak of the cities there is no town and no village where holy saints did not come and settle down. Many of the saints of the ^{or} Suhrawardi order are dead and gone under earth, but those are still alive are also in fairly large number³.

1. Dr. Enamul Haq, A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, p.145.
2. This saint was a disciple of Shaikh 'Alā' al-Huq of Pandua (Akhbār al-Akhyār, p.166). The letter was written in connection with the ascendancy of Raja Ganesh by supplanting the Ilyās Shāhī Sultāns. The subject is outside the scope of the present work. But details may be seen in Abdul Karim: Banglā Itihās, Sultānī Amal, pp.253-254.
3. Bengal: Past and Present, vol. LXVII, Serial No. 130, 1948, pp. 35-36. Dr. A. Karim: Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, pp. 85-86.

It is therefore, clear that Bengal became a stronghold of the Sūfīs from the very early period ^{of} ~~by~~ Muslim rule as has been said already. According to traditions many Sūfīs came to Bengal even prior to the Muslim conquest. Of them, the names of Bābā Adam Shāhid of Qādī Qasbah, Vikrampur, Dhaka, Shāh Sultān Rūmī of Madanpur, Netrakona, Mymensingh, Shāh Sultān Mahisawār of Mahasthan, Boggra, Makhdūm Shāh Daulah Shāhid of Shahjampur, Pabna and Makhdūm Shāh Mahmūd Ghaznavī of Mangalkot, Burduwan, may be cited. Dr. Muhammad Enamul Haq has discussed about them in details.¹ Their dargāhs are still visited by hundreds of people daily, though the choronology of their lives and activities, ~~---~~ can not be satisfactorily established². Among early Sūfīs about whom written materials are available and whose dates may be satisfactorily established are also many. Some of the prominent ones are Shaikh Jalāl al-Dīn Tabrizī and Shaikh Akhī Sirāj al-dīn Uthmān. Shaikh Jalāl al-dīn Tabrizī is probably the oldest in point of choronology; he belonged to the Suhrawardī order and introduced the Suhrawardī Silsilah in Bengal. His disciples came to be known as Jalāliah Sūfīs.³ Shaikh Akhī Sirāj al-dīn Uthmān was a disciple of Shaikh Nizām al-dīn Auliya of Delhi. He established the Chishtia Silsilah in Bengal and his chief disciple was Shaikh Alā' al-Huq.⁴ After that there was a long line of Chishtia Sūfīs in the family of

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1. Muhammad Enamul Haq : A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, pp.144-158.
 2. Dr. Abdul Karim has discussed the question in details in his Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, pp.86-90.
 3. Dr. Enamul Haq, A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal; Dr. A. Karim : Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, pp.91-92.
 4. Dr. Enamul Haq: A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, p.170.
Dr. A. Karim: Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, p.104.

Shaikh 'Alā'-al-Huq. His son Shaikh Nūr Qutub 'Ālam and his great-grand son Shaikh Zāhid attained very great proficiency in the spiritual field. There were also other sufis in the same family.¹ They also left a large number of disciples not only within but also outside Bengal. Chief among them were Mir Sayyid Ashraf Jahāngīr-Simnānī of Jaunpur and Shaikh Husām-al-dīn Manikpurī.²

These were the Sufis who came in the early period of Muslim rule. Their centre of activities were the capital cities of Gaud and Pandua. The shrine of Shaikh Jalāl-al-dīn Tabrizi is in Pandua while his name is also associated with his Chillakhāna at Deotala which was renamed Tabrizābād after him. There is a tradition that he came to Bengal during the reign of the Sena King Lakshman Sena, and fore-told the impending fall of the Sena kingdom in the hands of the Turks.³ How far it is true is not certain, but there is no doubt that he was one of the early Sūfīs because he was a disciple of Shaikh Shahāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī and a contemporary of Shaikh Bahā'-al-Dīn Zakariyā and Shaikh Qutub al-Dīn Bakhtyar Kākī.⁴ His dargāh at Pandua is known as Badī Dargāh or Bais hazari because the endowment of his dargāh is said to have yielded a revenue of twenty two thousand Tankas.⁵ The dargāh of Shaikh Akhī Sirāj al-Dīn 'Uthmān is at Gaud and

1. Dr.A.Karim; Social History of Muslims in Bengal, p.112.

2. Ibid : pp.112-113.

3. Dr. Enamul Huq; A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, p.145.

4. Dr.A.Karim; Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, pp.91-92.

5. Ibid, pp.92-94.

he is popularly known as Purana Pir or the old Pir.¹ Shaikh Alā' al-Huq and Shaikh Nūr Qutub Ālam and the Ṣūfīs of their family are lying buried at Pandua in the dargāh which goes by the name of Choti dargāh and Shāh Hazāri, because the income of the endowment was six thousand tankas.²

Ṣūfīs also spread out to the outlying areas, i.e. outside the metropolitan cities. Such Ṣūfīs are also credited to have taken part in the wars with the non-Muslims resulting in the conquest of those areas. Two representative cases of this nature may be discussed here,---that of the role of Ṣafī' al-dīn whose name is associated with the conquest of Satgaon or Triveni-area and Shāh Jalāl of Sylhet who is given the credit for the conquest of Sylhet and the spread of Islam there.

Shāh Ṣafī' al-dīn is lying buried at Chota Pandua in the Hugli district. According to tradition current in the area it is said that Shāh Ṣafī' al-dīn was the son of Barkhūrdār who was a noble in the court of Delhi. Barkhūrdār was also a brother-in-law of the king Firūz Shāh. So, Shāh Ṣafī' al-dīn was a nephew of the king Firūz Shāh. Although born of a ruling family, Shāh Ṣafī' al-dīn attained spiritual development and shunning worldly life, became a great Ṣūfī and thus he came to preach Islam in Bengal. At that time a local king named

1. Some say that he is called Piran-i-Pir, but this may not be correct, because Piran-i-Pir title is attributed to Shaikh Abd-al Qādir Jilānī who is also popularly known in Bengal as Bada Pir or the Great Pir. Abid Ali Khan and H.E. Stapleton:- Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua, p.30.

2. Ibid, p.106.

Pāṇḍav Rājā was ruling at Triveni; he was a conservative Hindu King and could not tolerate the Muslims. Once a Muslim living in the vicinity of his capital sacrificed a cow on the occasion of the ~~circumcision~~ circumcision of his son, a kite somehow carried a bit of flesh and threw it near the house of a Brahmin. On complaint from the Brahmin, the Hindu King punished the Muslim and killed his son. Shāh-Safī' al-dīn could not tolerate this intolerant attitude of the king, quarrel broke out between the king and the Sūfī resulting in an armed clash. The Shāh appealed to his uncle for help. The king sent an army under the command of Zafar Khān Ghāzī. Tradition also says that the Shāh received encouragement in this holy war from the famous North Indian saint Bu'Alī Qalandar of Panipat - Karnal and Shāh Bahram Saqqā also joined the holy war. With the help received from both the ruling king and brotherly saintly persons, Shāh Safī' al-dīn came out successful in the war and Treveni came under the Muslim rule.¹

The historicity of the tradition may now be examined. The tradition refers to the king Fīrūz Shāh, Pāṇḍav Rājā, Bu'Alī Qalandar, Zafar Khān Ghāzī and Bahram Saqqā. King Fīrūz Shāh may be identified with Sultān Shams al-dīn Fīrūz Shāh of Bengal who ruled from 1301-1322 A.D.² He cannot be identified with Sultān Jalāl al-dīn Fīrūz Khaljī of Delhi, because at that time Bengal was independent of Delhi, and the Delhi Sultān could not send an army to Bengal. So, if there is any truth in the tradition that the King sent an army to the aid of Shāh Safī' al-dīn,

1. For tradition see J.A.S.B., 1870, pp.394-97; 1874, pp.287ff, 1909, pp.248-51.

2. Dr.A.Karim; Corpus of the Muslim Coins of Bengal, p.26.

he was a king of Bengal. History also tells us that Satgāon or Triveni area was brought under the Muslim rule during the reigns of Sultān Rukn al-dīn Kaikāus Shāh (1291-1300 A.D.)¹ and Shams al-dīn Firūz Shāh. Pāndav Rājā is not known from any of the source, he might be a petty Zamīndār. Zafar Khān Ghāzī is known from other sources as the conqueror of Satgāon or Triveni area in Hugli district as a general of the Bengal Sultāns mentioned above.² He is lying buried there at Triveni in the vicinity of Shāh Safī' al-dīn's dargāh and also the mosque built by Zafar Khān Ghāzī himself. In popular tradition Zafar Khān Ghāzī is also known to be a saint. Bahrām Saqqā's dargāh is at Burdwan, and he was a contemporary of the Mughal emperor Akbar.³ So, Bahrām Saqqā could not be a contemporary either of Shāh Safī' al-dīn or of Zafar Khān Ghāzī or of Bū'Alī Qalandar.

Tradition also refers to Bū'Alī Qalandar who died in 724/1324 A.D.⁴ He was, therefore, a contemporary of the other persons (except Bahrām Saqqā) mentioned in the tradition. The above discussion, therefore, makes it clear that Shāh Safī' al-dīn played an important role in the expansion of Muslim power in south Bengal. This is an important instance of the penetration of Islam into a non-Muslim territory through the joint effort of the political power and the Muslim Sūfis. It is not certain who took the initiative, the political power or the Sūfis. The tradition, however, confirms that the Sūfis went first and the political power followed the sūfis in their aid.

1. Ibid, p.24.

2. History of Bengal, vol.II, pp.77ff, Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, vol.IV, Part-III, July 1956, pp.198-202.

3. Bengal district Gazetteers: Burdwan, p.190.

4. Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1870, p.125.

The conquest of Sylhet is attributed to Shāh Jalāl and his band of Dar^wish followers. The tradition is almost similar to that of Triveni conquest. It is said that one Shaikh Burhān al-dīn was a resident in the neighbourhood of Sylhet while Gaud Govinda was the King of that area. The Shaikh made a vow to sacrifice a cow if he was blessed with a son. His prayer was accepted and in course of time a son was born to him. To fulfil his vow, he sacrificed a cow to celebrate the birth of his son. A Kite somehow carried a bit of flesh of the sacrificed cow and dropped it in the residence of an orthodox Brahmin who complained to the King about this irreligious act and begged of the king to take appropriate steps in the matter. The King Gaud Govinda was enraged at the news of the sacrilegious act of cow - slaughter in his kingdom. The Raja took up the case seriously, he sent for Shaikh Burhān al-dīn and his infant baby. He at once sentenced the baby to death and amputated the right hand of Shaikh Burhān al-Dīn. The sentences were executed promptly. In utter grief Burhān al-Dīn left Sylhet for Gaud and begged of the Sultān for remedy. The Sultān of Bengal took Burhān al-Dīn to protection, and ordered his nephew Sikandar Khān Ghāzī to invade the King of Gaud Govinda of Sylhet. Sikandar Khān Ghāzī marched with a large army, the Rājā Gaud Govinda faced the Muslim army boldly and defeated them. The Sultān of Bengal heard about the defeat of his nephew with great sorrow and at once sent reinforcements under his able General Nāṣir al-Dīn. Even then the army of the Sultān did not ~~find~~^{feel} encourage^d to renew the fight. At this hour of crisis, Shāh Jalāl with his three hundred sixty darwish followers joined the

Muslim army. When the war was resumed, the Muslim army came out successful and Sylhet was conquered and Rājā Gaud Govinda took to flight.¹

After the conquest, Shāh Jalāl and his followers settled in Sylhet; Shāh Jalāl was a celebrate, he devoted himself to mystic-exercises, to teaching and preaching. But he allowed his followers to be peaceful settlers in and around Sylhet. This is how north eastern frontier of Bengal came under the Muslim rule. The date of Shāh Jalāl and the conquest of Sylhet is known from inscriptions. One inscription, for example, says that the first conquest of Sylhet in the hands of the Muslims was made in 1303 A.D.² So, Shāh Jalāl and his followers must have come to Bengal towards the beginning of the 14th century. From the evidence of Ibn Batūt^tah we also know that Shāh Jalāl died in the year 1348 A.D.³

Fourteenth century was an age of great strides of the Muslim culture in Bengal. Prior to this, Muslim power as well as Muslim culture was confined to Gaud and Pandua and the adjoining territories. But with the turn of the 14th century Muslim power penetrated into the outlying parts in the outlying districts. This was largely due to the influx of large number of Sūfīs in Bengal. It is in collaboration of the Sūfīs that the Muslim rulers expanded their power. Chittagong also came under

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1. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1873, pp.69-73.
Shams Uddin Ahmad; Inscriptions of Bengal, vol.IV, pp.24-25.
 2. Shams Uddin Ahmad : Inscriptions of Bengal, vol.IV, p.25.
 3. H.A.R.Gibb; Ibn Batuttah : Travels in Asia and Africa, pp.268-70;
Dr.Enamul Huq; A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, p.223;
N.K.Bhattachali, Coins and Chronology of the early Independent Sultans of Bengal, p.150.

the Muslims in the middle of the 14th century; during the time when Shāh Jalāl was living in Sylhet, Chittagong was visited by Saints like Shāh Badar as has been stated in a previous chapter. The Chittagong conquest by the Muslims, in collaboration with the Sūfīs, therefore, must be viewed in the broader perspective of the Muslim expansion in Triveni or Sylhet as has just been discussed. Professor Abdul Karim writes about this phenomenon in the following words.¹

“In this period Muslim power in Bengal for the first time had full faith on its own strength. The Sultanate could hope to protect itself not only against Hindu insurrection but also against external aggression, and at the same time carry further Balban's Programme of conquest and expansion. Bengal became the refuge of Ilbari Turks and their supporters. Probably this addition in man and power aided in extension of the Muslim territory. Along with this political growth must be viewed the development in the socio-religious side of the Muslims. We hear of numerous scholars, poets, darwishes and theologians arriving in Bengal and opening up new centres of education and religious instructions. The new cities that rose to prominence were Bihār Sharīf, Satgaon, Pandua (Fīrūzābād), Sunārgaon and Sylhet. They became the abode of Muslim saints, centres of Islamic learning, administrative headquarters and Commercial centres. It is this organisation of the cities that wielded Muslim authority in this vast region, and with the spread of Muslim population in the train of the saints, teachers and theologians that this authority sustained

1. Dr.A.Karim: Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, pp.25-26.

against the opposition of the Hindu populace. In this period was also laid the foundation of those institutions, social, religious and educational, that in due course led to the development of local Muslim culture. The foundation was laid by men who came from far a field like Abū Tawwāmah at Sunārgāon, Shāh Jalāl at Sylhet while the Madrasah^a of Zafar Khān at Satgāon, the tradition of Shaikh Badar at Chittagong and the dargāhs of Shaikh Jalāl Tabrizī and Nur Qutub Alam at Pandua laid this foundation on strong basis. Culturally the Muslim society in Bengal continued to keep contact or link with the Muslims outside, especially with the Muslim occupation of Chittagong the Arab migration received further impetus."

We have seen that Chittagong came into contact with the Arabian Muslims from the 8th to the 9th centuries A.D. But the Muslim political power penetrated to this part of Bengal only in the middle of the 14th century. The Sūfīs who took an active part in the expansion of Islam in Chittagong, will be dealt with in the next chapter. It should, however, be stated here that Chittagong became a strong hold of Islam, with a large number of dargāhs and mazārs all over the area. The number of Muslims have also gone up, at present more than eighty five percent of the population are represented by the Muslims. The Islamic influence may be discerned everywhere in Chittagong. By the time ^{the} Sūfīs came to Chittagong, the Sūfī-ism had already passed its silsilah or Tariqah-stage. As has also been stated, the Chief Silsilahs which came to Bengal were the Suhrawardia, Chishtiya, Qadiriya,

Naqshbandia and Shattāria. Still later came the Mujaddidia silsilah founded by Hadrat Shaikh Ahmad Fārūqī, Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-thānī. His real name is Abū al-Barakāt Badar al-dīn and he happens to be a descendant of Hadrat Omar al-Fārūq. He embodied in his order all the four Principal orders and gained a tremendous popularity in this part of Bengal through his Khalīfa Shaikh Badī al-dīn Ahmad; as a result the Sufis of the later period are mostly linked up with this order.¹ The Chishtia, Suhrawardia, Qādiria, Shattāria and Mujaddidia orders gained a prominent place in Bengal and especially the saints of these orders served the cause of Islam in various ways and exercised a tremendous influence on the minds ^{and} of morals of the people of Chittagong in particular and also to the people of Bangladesh in general. They raised the moral standard of the Muslims and stimulated in them a high degree of spiritualism.

Besides the Tariqah or Silsilahs, we have mentioned above, a new Tariqah was also introduced in Chittagong called Maizbhandārī Tariqah; the originator of this Tariqah is Hadrat Shah Ahmad Allāh who was a profound scholar and a great Sūfī and this order as we shall discuss later, in course of the discussion of his life and teachings, was an off-shoot of Tariqah-i-Muhammadia of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd. Hadrat Shah Ahmad Allāh was succeeded by his nephew Hadrat Shah Ghulam al-Rahmān who revived the Maulawīa Tariqah of the Sūfis where a stereo typed music and dance form a part of their ecstatic-Communion.

1. Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam; vol.I, p.90.

CHAPTER - III

Bāra Auliya of Chittagong

Chittagong is traditionally known as a Bāra Auliya-Desh or the land of twelve Auliya (twelve saints). The tradition means that twelve Sūfis first came to Chittagong for the propagation of Islam. There are hundreds of Mazārs still found in and around Chittagong, so it is difficult to say why the number of Auliya is limited to twelve only. But the tradition is an old one as proved by the fact that the 17th century Bengali poet Muhammad Khān also has spoken of twelve Auliya who conquered Chittagong and planted Islam there. The poet however, does not give the names of all the twelve Auliya, for the sake of brevity of his book, but he gives the names of only three of them - Kadal Khān Ghāzi or Shāh Qattāl, Shāh Badar Alam and Shaikh Sharīf al-Dīn.¹ The poet in course of discussing his ancestry refers to two other persons, ----Māhīawār and Hājī Khalīl Pīr; if these two persons are also taken to have belonged to the twelve Auliya,² we get the names of five Sūfis.

In an Arabic manuscript collected by the Department of History, Chittagong University and preserved in the library of that University, we get a few lists of Sūfis. The lists are those of Dawāzdah Auliya or twelve Pīrs, Pīr Panjah or Pānch Pīr, Chehel Abdāl or forty Abdāls, Jumlah Auliya or all Auliya or Sūfis and Chahār Pīr

1. Shahitya Patrikā, Winter number, 1369 B.S., pp.210-211.

2. Some scholars believe that they also belonged to twelve Auliya, c.f. Mahbubul-Alam: Chattagramer Itihās, (Purānā Amal), pp.99-100.

or four Pirs.¹ Dr. Abdul Karim has examined the manuscript and has found that the names of these Sūfīs as found in the manuscript and who are known to have come to Chittagong are Shāh Qattāl Karam al-Dīn, Shaikh Sharīf al-Dīn, Shāh Hājī Khalīl Pīr, Shāh Badar Alam, Shāh Masnad or Shāh Muhsin Auliya, Shāh Sultān Bayazīd Bistāmī and Shāh Sundar.² Muhammad Muqīm, a later Bengali poet, the author of Gul-i-Bakawālī also gives names of some early Sūfīs of Chittagong. While discussing his ancestry, he also discussed the religious sanctity of Chittagong, where his fore-fathers came and settled. In doing so, he mentions the names of some early Sūfīs like Shāh Zāhid, Shāh-Panthī, Shāh Pīr, Hādī Bādsha, Shāh Sundar, Shāh Sultān, Shāh Shaikh Farīd and Shāh Badar.³ It may be noted that most of the names ~~are~~ in all these sources are common and on this basis we may prepare the following list of the early Sūfīs of Chittagong:-⁴

- 1). Shāh Qattāl.
- 2). Shāh Sharīf al-Dīn.
- 3). Mahī Sawār.
- 4). Hājī Khalīl Pīr.
- 5). Shāh Badar.
- 6). Shāh Sundar.
- 7). Shāh Muhsin Auliya.
- 8). Shāh Zāhid.
- 9). Shāh Panthī.
- 10). Shāh Pīr.
- 11). Shāh Sultān.
- 12). Hādī Bādsha.
- 13). Shāh Shaikh Farīd.

1. There is no title for the manuscript nor it is dated. The names of Mughal emperors and Bengal Nawabs are also available, the last name is that of Sirāj al-dula. So the manuscript may be dated from the 18th century. The name of the author is also not found.

2. Abdul Karim: Chattagrāme Islam, p.67.

3. A Descriptive Catalogue of Bengali Manuscripts of Munshi Abdul Karim, edited by Ahmad Sharif and translated into English by Sayyid Sajjad Husain, p.86.

4. There are thirteen names in this list, but it cannot be said that all they belonged to the Bāra Auliya or twelve Pirs who are traditionally known as Bāra Auliya in Chittagong.

The dates of many of these Ṣūfīs are not known, the names of many of them have come down to us through tradition. Some of them definitely, however, belonged to the twelve Auliya of Chittagong. We propose to discuss about them according to chronological order in the following pages. In this Chapter we shall deal only with those Ṣūfīs who are traditionally associated with the ~~above~~ twelve Auliya.¹

1). Shāh Qattāl.

There are several variants of the name of this saint --- Kadal Khān Ghāzī Pīr according to Muḥammad Khān and tradition, Qadar Khān Ghāzī and Shāh Qattāl Karam al-Dīn in the Arabic manuscript. It seems that his real name is Shāh Qattāl, because one locality in Chittagong is named Kātālganj or Qattāl Ganj after his name. If his name was Qadar Khān or Kadal Khān, the name of the place would have been Qadarganj or Kadalganj. His grave also lies in the same locality. It is situated on the Chittagong-Hathazari Road, a little to the north of the present Panchlaish-Police Station. The mausoleum covering the grave is an one domed structure, it is very small in size and architecturally it can not be placed to a very old period of time. May be it was built in the late Mughal period. The small size of the Mazar easily attracts the attention of a passers-by. The grave seems to ~~be~~ be that of a ten-twelve year old boy,² On enquiry, the Imam of the

1. We do not discuss here the significance of the number twelve attached to the saints. In Bengal, the number twelve seems to have an special significance, as it is associated with many other things, like Bāra Bhuiyān, Bāroarī (Bāra Yārī). In those instances also the actual number or the actual personages cannot be determined. For an interesting discussion on the subject see M.A.Rahim : The Afghans in India, p.217.

2. See, Plate I(b).

nearby mosque says that the Mazar of Shāh Qattāl here is a Zawāb, Shāh Qattāl is not lying buried here. Imām did not show any reason, nor could he say where exactly the saint is lying buried.

It is difficult to identify Shāh Qattāl of Chittagong. Shaikh Abd al-Huq Dehlavi in his Akhbār-al-Akhyār gives a brief sketch of one Shāh Qattāl, whose full name is Sayyid Sadar al-Dīn Rāzū Qattāl Bukhārī.¹ He was a brother of another famous Sūfi, Sayyid Jalāl al-dīn Bukhārī who came to Bengal and stayed for some time in Pandua.² He died in Uchh in modern Pakistan and died in 1383 A.D.³ Razu Qattal Bukhari died in 827/A.D.1423.⁴ Shaikh Sadar al-dīn Rāzū Qattāl was, therefore, a contemporary of the conquest of Chittagong by the Muslims; moreover as his brother came to Pandua, it was just possible that he also came to Bengal as far as east as Chittagong. Shāh Qattāl of Chittagong may, therefore, be identified with Sayyid Sadar al-dīn Rāzū Qattāl Bukhārī.

2). Hājī Khalīl Pīr.

His name is known only from the writings of the poet Muhammad Khān. The poet says, 'Hājī Khalīl Pīr wished to go on a world voyage again; Mahī Aswār also gladly accompanied him with the intention of travelling in the world. On coming to the sea-shore, Hājī Khalīl Pīr were lion-skin, at the command of God, one fish came to them and both

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1. 'Abdul-Huq Dehlavi: Akhbār al-Akhyār, Urdu translation, Karachi, 1963, p.276.
 2. 'Abid 'Alī Khān and H.E.Stapleton: Memoirs of Gaud and Pandua, pp.91-92.
 3. Ain-i-Akbarī, vol.III, translated by H.S.Jarrett, p.369, Enamul Huq: A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, p.170.
 4. 'Abd-al-Huq Dehlavi: Akhbār al-Akhyār, Urdu translation, p.276.

of them rode on the back of the fish and started for the voyage in the name of God¹. The poet says that both Māhī Aswār (the poet's ancestor) and Hājī Khalīl Pīr came to Chittagong on the back of a fish. Leaving aside the super-human aspect of the story, it is clear that they came by the sea-route. It will be seen later that Badar Shāh and Muhsin Auliya also came by sea. Chittagong, being a sea-port, being situated on the sea-shore, it is very probable that they came by sea and also probably from Arabia.

Nothing more is known about him. Muhammad Khān's evidence shows that he was a Pīr, he was a world traveller and came out on a world voyage for several times. This last information suggests that he was a trader and came out of his country for the purpose of trade. But the local tradition and the evidence of Muhammad Khān suggest that he was a Sūfī and belonged to the group of twelve Auliya of Chittagong. In the list of the followers of Shāh Jalāl of Sylhet, there is one Hājī Khalīl Pīr and some scholars believe that both Hājī Khalīl Pīrs were the one and the same person and that he is lying buried at Sylhet.² But except the similarity of name, there is no other evidence to support this view.

1. Sahitya Patrikā Rainy season issue, 1366 B.S., pp.101-103.

হাজী খলিল পীর ওর চাহি পৃথিবীর	আসিতে সমুদ্র তীর সে হাজী খলিল পীর
কিরিয়া আসিতে আরবার	সিংহ চৰ্মে কৈলা আরোহন
সহরিশে তান সংগে পৃথিবী ঐমিতে রবে	আলাহর করমান পাই এক মৎস্য আইন খাই
চলি ভেলা মাছি আহোয়ার ।	পৃথক পাতি দিনা ততকণ
	আলাহর অস্তিত্ত করি সে মৎস্যের পৃথকৈতে চড়ি
	চলি ভেলা '.....'।।

2. Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Patrikā, vol.54, Nos.1 and 2, P.25.

3) Māhisawār

He was the ancestor of the poet Muhammad Khān. Muhammad Khān calls him as Māhisawār. According to Maulvi Hamid Allāh Khān his name was Bakhtyār and he was more popular as Bakhtyār Māhisawār. It has just been shown that he, alongwith Hājī Khalīl Pīr came to Chittagong on the back of the fish i.e. by sea-route. Here in Chittagong he married a Brahmin girl and left for his home land. He left Children by his Brahmin wife and the names of a long line of descendants have been given by the poet Muhammad Khān. It seems that he was also a trader and came to Chittagong in connection with his business, but the local tradition attributes to him spiritual attainments and he is grouped among the twelve Auliya. In fact the spiritual attainments has been attributed to him by the poet Muhammad Khān. He writes,³.

Translation : " While Māhi Aswār (correctly Māhisawār) was travelling through that country (Chittagong), he saw the daughter of Achārya. She excelled Vidyādhara (Singer in the court of gods) in beauty, her smile and talk outpoured nectar and her eyes were like lotus. When Māhisawār saw her, he proposed to the Brahmin to marry her. When Achārya did not agree, he rode on a tiger and appeared before the Brahmin. All the Brahmins fled away out of fear, Achārya paused and gave his daughter in marriage."

4) Shaikh Sharīf al-dīn

As Māhisawār was the paternal ancestor of the poet Muhammad Khān, Shaikh Sharīf al-dīn was the maternal ancestor of the poet. The name of a line of his descendants are also supplied by Muhammad Khān.⁴ According to the poet, his maternal ancestral family was the family of religious persons and there were a number of Pirs and Qadīs in the family.

1. Ahādīth al-Khawānīn or Tārīkh-i-Hamīdī, pp. 110-111.
2. See Supra, p-9
3. Abdul karim : Bānglā Prāchin Punthir Bivarana, part -1, Bāngiya Sāhitya Parishad Patrikā, additional number, B.S. 1310, pp. 159-161.

মাহি-আসওয়ার ভব
কপেবিন্যবিরাজিত
দোম মাহি আসওয়ার
আচার্য্য নাদিন ভব
ভবুবিদ্য বিপ্লব
দোম মাহি আসওয়ার
দোম মাহি আসওয়ার
সুখাশাস মাহি
নামক মাহি আসওয়ার
বিপ্লব মাহি আসওয়ার
মাহি আসওয়ার
বিপ্লব মাহি আসওয়ার
আচার্য্য ভাবনা মাহি
দান মাহি আসওয়ার

4. Supra, P.9.

This is evidenced by the fact that the names of his ancestors are prefixed or suffixed by words signifying their religious and educational pursuits.¹ Shaikh-Sharīf al-dīn was a contemporary of Shāh Qattāl and Shāh Badar and belonged to twelve Auliya. The place of his burial is not known or for that matter, nothing more is known about him.

5). Shāh Badar.

The most important and prominent saint of Chittagong district is popularly known as Badar Shāh, although he is called by different names, Badar Shāh, Badar Pīr, Pīr Badar and Badar Ālam. His real name is not known to any body. According to the poet Muhammad Khān, while his ancestor, Mahisawār accompanied by Hājī Khalīl Pīr reached Chittagong, he met Kadal-Khān Ghāzi and Badar Ālam. This Badar Ālam or Badar Shāh is very much honoured by both Muslims and Hindus and they with their utmost reverence and affection, visit the shrine of this guardian saint of Chittagong. According to tradition, it was Badar Shāh who preached Islam first in Chittagong. At that time Chittagong was the abode of 'Jinns' and 'Fairies' ^{and} as they made it impossible for him to preach Islam in Chittagong. The saint prayed for a small space that might accommodate only a 'Chāti' or earthen lamp. A space was offered to him at the top of the hillock, now situated near north of Qadam Mubārak at Rahmatganj. When Badar Shāh lighted his 'Chāti', its flame began to spread till gradually it engulfed the whole of Chittagong. The 'Jinns' and 'Fairies' could not stand the flame of the 'Chāti' and

1. For the list see Abdul Karim : Chattagrāme Islam, pp.32-33.

Dargāh Maidān at Badarpati. At that time thousands of people pay their homage to this guardian saint and the entire area takes a festive look in commemorating his first conquest of Chittagong by the Muslims. Besides, people always attend to the shrine of this principal saint every day for Ziārat and to offer fateha. It has almost become customary in Chittagong for the players as well as for the boatmen on the eve of the play or before sailing to recite the following couplet:-

আমরা আছি গোলা গান,
গাজী গংগা নিঘাহ্‌বান
দিয়ে গংগা দরিয়া পাঁচ পীর বদর বদর ।^১

Translation : (We are a few children. Ghazi and Ganga are our protector. The Ganges and sea are over our head, five Pirs and Badar, Badar).

Again they say ' দরিয়াকে পাঁচ পয়সা বদর বদর ' ।
(To the ocean five paisa, Badar Badar).²

The boys of Chittagong during their leisure period, specially in winter season, in various kinds of their play cite the name of Pīr Badar while starting their games. According to the genealogical table of the poet Muhammad Khan, Māhisawār and Hājī Khalīl, just after their arrival in Chittagong, through the sea, met Badar Ālam. But no evidence is there whether Badar Ālam came to Chittagong by sea. Instead, Badar Ālam was, as per description of the poet Muhammad Khan, living in Chittagong. But the local ballad of the boatman justifies the assumption

1. Abdul Karim : Social history of the Muslims in Bengal, p.168.
2. Journal of Asiatic Society of Pakistan, vol.VII, No.1, p.41.

that Pīr Badar also arrived by sea route. In the shrine of Badar Shāh in Chittagong at Badarpati, a long piece of stone & resembling the shape of a boat is still preserved. The Khādims say that on that stone, Badar Shāh came to Chittagong through sea. Water is stored on that stone and the devotees drink water from there with the hope of getting blessings or to get rid of their wounds through washing by that water. Sikandar Dhul Qarnain was in search of the well of Ab-i-Hayāt (i.e. water for longevity of life) accompanied by his Wazīr Khwaja Khidr; luckily Khwaja Khidr discovered the well of Ab-i-Hayāt and drank its water, as a result his life was prolonged. Since then it is believed by people that Khwaja Khidr saves the people who face danger in the sea or in the river. But here in Chittagong people utter the name of Pīr Badar instead of Khwaja Khidr. But in other parts of the country, people celebrate Khwaja Khidr day in memory of Khwaja Khidr¹ along with the name of Pīr Badar, Ghazi Mian or Ghazi Saheb and Panch Pīr. Their names are also equally remembered by the sailors.² Who are পাঁচ পীর (Five Pīrs) cannot be ascertained, because in different places in different areas the names of Panch Pīr differ.³ But in the list of the five Pīrs, the name of Ghāzī Mian is common.⁴ In some lists the names of Pīr Badar is also common.⁵ This is why along with the পাঁচ পীর (Five Pīrs) the names of Pīr Badar and Ghāzī Mian or Ghāzī Saheb are remembered by the sailors. Besides the boatmen and the players, who remember the name of

1. Ibid., pp.42-43.

2. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, vol.7, No.1, p.45.

3. Abdul Karim: Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, p.168.

4. Ibid.,

5. Ibid.,

Pir Badar, there are other commemorative edifices, which are generally known as Badar Muqām. There are several Badar Muqāms in this area extending from the Tippera state in India along the sea-coast upto the Malayan Peninsula. The Badar Muqām of Tippera is a small pucca building, which, along with a pucca mosque, commemorate the Muslim conquest of Tippera by the Mughals in the reign of Jahangir.¹ In the southern limit of Chittagong near Teknaf on the sea-shore, there is a second Badar Muqām, and in the Arakan coast there are several such buildings, which go by the name of Badar Muqām. About the Badar Muqāms, Enamul Haq and Abdul Karim Sahitya Visharad observe as follows: 'The different historians agree that Islam was spread in Chittagong during the 9th and 10th centuries.A.D. During that period in Assam border and in the Malayasian peninsula and also in the different places of coastal areas, a kind of typical mosques started growing and to these mosques, the Buddhists and the Chinese Muslims show respects. These mosques are known as Badar Muqāms, but the Buddhists call them Budder Muqām and this associate them with the Buddha.² Siddique Khan has also given the description of 'Badar Muqām'. He himself saw the 'Badar Muqām' in Akyab and says that in that 'Badar Muqām' there are two buildings, the first one having minarat and domes and situated in a hillock and ~~situated in a hillock~~ and resembles like mosques of this sub-continent and by the side, there is a cave which is built of stone and that cave is said to have been used by Pir Badar for meditation as his Chilla Khāna.³

1. Rajmala, History of the Kings of Tippera ed.by Kali Prasanna Sen, vol.III, pp.217-218.

2. Arakan Rāj Shavāi Bāṅlā Sahittya, Calcutta, 1935, p.3.

3. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, vol.7, no.1, p.18.

might Manik Sawdagar dreamt that Pir Badar asked him to make a cave from where they fetched water. While Manik Sawdagar complained of their insolvency, the Pir Sahab told them that their all turmeric would turn into gold. When they got up in the morning they found to their astonishment that all of their turmeric on board had turned into gold. Thereafter, they built-up those buildings of 'Badar Muqam'. Since that very day, the Muslims, the Hindus, the Buddhists have been paying homage at the place. Besides the 'Badar Muqam' of Akyab, many more traces of existence of Badar Muqam are available. But except the 'Badar Muqam of Akyab all other Badar Muqams have been effaced and till now the Muslims of Akyab take care of 'Badar Muqam' with utmost veneration'.¹ Scholars agree that Badar Muqam bears the memory of Pīr Badar. Therefore, it appears that not only in Chittagong but also in Arakan and even in Malaysia i.e. throughout the whole coastal area Pīr Badar enjoys respect and reverence and the people of those areas pay their homage with due solemnity.

There is also an endless controversy about the identity of Pīr Badar. As stated already he is known by different names, Pīr Badar, Badar Shāh, Shāh Badar and Shāh Badar Alam. There are also several other saints in Bengal and Bihar bearing the name of Badar. For example, there are dargāhs of Pir Badar at Kalna in Burdwan, and at Hemtabad in Dinajpur.² Finally there is Pīr Badar al-Dīn Badar-i-Ālam of Bihar who died in A.D. 1440 and is lying buried at Chhoti Dargah.³ And in Chittagong

1. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, vol.VII, No.1, pp.19-31.

2. Dr. ... ; A History of Sufism in Bengal, p.180

3. 4b.

alone, there are four places where the dargāhs of Pīr Badar is found, namely, Boalkhali, Patiya, Raozan and Rangunia. The modern scholars deem all these Badar or Badar Shāh as one and say that all these Badars are one and the same person, who died in A.D.1440 and who was laid to rest in Bihar at Chhoti Dargah¹. Not much is known about the life and works of this Badar al-Dīn Badar-i-Ālam. Some scholars view that he was born in Meerat and some say that he took his birth in the Punjab area. He was the disciple of Shaikh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā Manerī and died in A.D.1440 after the death of Shaikh Sharf al-Dīn Yahyā,² So, chronologically Badar Shāh of Chittagong cannot be the same person as Pīr Badar al-dīn Badar-i-Ālam of Bihar. Because Badar Shāh of Chittagong was alive in 1340 A.D.i.e. during the conquest of Chittagong by Sultān Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh of Sunargaon exactly one hundred years before. Secondly, Pīr Badar al-Dīn Badar-i-Ālam's name is associated with Meerut or the Punjab. But the name of Badar Shāh of Chittagong is associated with sea, he is more venerated by the seafarers. It has already been stated that in the shrine of Badar Shāh at Chittagong, there is a log of ^{stone} wood shapped like a boat. It is preserved in the shrine as a sacred relic and the Khādims say that this was the boat on which Pīr Badar passed through the sea and reached Chittagong. In all probability, Badar Shāh was an Arab and came from Arabia through the sea, like his other companions, Mahisawar and Hājī

1. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, vol.VII, No.1, p.38.

2. Ibid.

Khalil Pir, about whose Arab origin there is undoubted evidence in the poet Muhammad Khan's Maqtul Husain. So we may conclude that Badar Shah of Chittagong was a different person than Pir Badar al-Din Badar-i-Alam of Bihar and that he flourished about one century prior to the latter. About other Badar Shah of Kalna or Hemtabad, it may be said that there could be many Pirs with the same name as we find in the case of Jalal, a name borne by several sufis in Bengal. The above discussion shows that Pir Badar of Chittagong and Badar al-Din Badar-i-Alam who is buried in the Chhoti-Dargah of Bihar are not one and the same person and on the same ground it may be affirmed that the Shrine of Pir Badar in Chittagong is neither Zawab nor fake. Particularly the Mazar of Pir Badar at Badar Pati, its architectural design, leaves an impression that the shrine is very old one and was built in the Sultanate period.¹ The great Sufi Badar Shah lies buried here.

The Mazar of Badar Shah is situated at Badar Pati near Bakhshir Hat.² On the western-side of the Mazar goes a bye-lane and adjacent to this bye-lane a mosque is there where the devotees offer their prayer while visiting the Mazar. A few yards ahead towards west, the Dargah Sharif of Shah Amanat is situated. Badar Shah's dargah ^{is} situated on a small hillock. During the days of Shihab al-Din Talish the Mazar was within the Magh fort. From this fort the area is now known as

1. Prof. A. Karim emphatically says that Badar Shah is lying buried in Chittagong and the mazar at Chittagong is not a zawab. Chattagram Islam, p. 79.

2. See Plate I(a).

Andarkilla (correctly Andar Qila). The hillocks surrounding the Mazar are now demolished to make rooms for markets and residences. There is no doubt that original residences and markets centered round the Mazar of Badar Shah to cater to the needs of hundreds of visitors who daily offer their prayers and Fatiha in the Mazar. The mausoleum is a one-domed structure, the entrance doors having pointed arches. This is a square building exquisitely beautiful architecturally. Originally the Mazar was surrounded by enclosure walls. They are now in ruins, except the remnants of the western entrance of the enclosure-wall. The entire constructions within the wall, except the Mazar and the domed structure over it, have now been demolished due to encroachments.

His 'Urs Mubarak:- Every year on the 29th of Ramadan his 'Urs is celebrated with pomp and glory. The prayer offered by the people during the 'Urs ceremony is simple. They arrange Milad Mahfil, offer tasbeeh and tahlil and implore assistance of the Pir in the forum. It is not known to which Tariqah the Pir Badar belonged, but it is to be noted that nothing is done by the devotees which may be termed as un-Islamic in principle. The non-Muslims however, offer Sijdah in the Mazar. The tomb of Badar Pir was all along an object of veneration to all classes of people----Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists. During the 'Urs, the Dargah and its adjacent places take a festive look and people from all over attend the 'Urs with love and reverence. Milad-Mahfil and recitation from the holy Quran is offered during the

'Urs and people from all corners of the country attend the 'Urs with immense respect and sacrifice animals to feed the poor and the devotees.

6). Shah Sundar

The grave of Shah Sundar is located in the street-island in between the modern Kotwali thana and the Chittagong Development Authority.¹ Nothing is known about him except that people rank him as one of the twelve Auliya. A Khādim looks after the grave and people offer fateha and make donation to the Khādim as they like. Since his name is mentioned as an early Sufi of Chittagong by the poet Muhammad Muqim, it may be said that his Mazar was very much respected by the people of Chittagong from early times.

7). Shah Muhsin Auliya.

The Dargah of the saint was previously in the village of Jhiary in the Anwara Police-station. Afterwards it was removed to a neighbouring village, Battali, where the Dargah still exists. The traditional account which is current in the locality and narrated by the descendants of the saint, is as follows:- It is said that once the saint accompanied by Makhdum Shah Badar al-Din Badar-i-Alam Zahidi, whose Shrine is in Saharanpur district at Siwan came to Gaud via Panipat.² They did not like to live there and hence left the place for Dhaka, whence they started for Chittagong by water. They used three floating instruments viz., a plank of wood, a katla fish and a big block of stone. Muhsin Auliya used the last mentioned water transport. In time

1. Plate II (a).

2. Moulana Obaid al-Haq : Bangladesh-er-Pir Auliyan, p.373.

he reached the village Jhiari, settled there and began to preach Islam among the Hindus. The saint had no son, but a daughter called Nirmāi Bibī and a nephew (brother's son) named Shāh Sikandar. The saint had given his daughter in marriage with his nephew before ^{he} ~~they~~ left home for Bengal. But as he was not returning home for a long time, his daughter and son-in-law came to Bengal in search of him and if possible to take him back to his native land Panipat . But they failed in persuading the saint to their proposal and so they too made up their minds to live with him at Jhiari. After a few days of their arrival at Jhiari, Shāh Muhsin Auliya died and was buried in the Khānqah. Nirmāi Bibī and her husband Sikandar did never return to their native land and they had a son called Shāh Qutub al-Dīn whose descendants are still living in Jhiari.

Removal of the saint's tomb :- The former tomb of Shāh Muhsin Auliya at Jhiari was on the bank of the river Shanka which changes its course annually.¹ Once the river changed its course, ^{1,00} dangerously that the grave of the saint was about to be washed away. A local 'Zamīndār' a wealthy and an influential man in the area, was thrice ordered in dream to shift the 'Mazār' to some other safer place. But the Zamīndār did not pay any heed to it. While the people of the locality came to know of this, they removed the grave of the saint to a neighbouring village Battali where it is still lying. It is said that even now, the descendants of Zabardast Khan, a former Zamīndār of the locality, fail

¹. Dr. Enamul Haq : A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, p.254.

to burn a votive lamp beside and in the compound of the saint's grave.¹

A peculiar custom is still prevalent in the shrine of the saint at Battali. The shrine is built of massonary bricks, but the roof is of straw-thatch; it is never made pucca. There are two Bera families of house builders (Gharani) whose time honoured traditional duty is to thatch the roof of ^{the saint} once in a year, at the end of the Bengali month of Phalgun, or beginning of Chaitra. This must be done within this period and done by men belonging to those two-families. If any of the people do this job, rain obstructs the work of roofing.

According to another tradition collected by Dr.A.Karim, Muhsin Auliya was the nephew (sister's son) of Badar Shah. On his arrival ^{at} of Jhiari, a dumb baby regained his power of speech and this had earned for the saint immense reverence and respect from the local people. The village Jhiary is populated by the Bera community. So, low caste Bera community became very much attracted to his miracles and due to the impassionate love and reverence, they shifted the grave of Shah Muhsin Auliya from Jhiari to Battala. The fact that the people of this community alone can build the roof of the Mazar, also prove that there was attachment between the saint and the Bera community.²

1. Mqulana Obaid al-Haq : Bangladesh-er-Pir Auliyagan, p.373.

2. Bera community are those who bear 'Palki' burdened with men and women and carry them from one place to another in the absence of means of communication in the then period. Still this system prevails in farflung areas of villages in Chittagong where the means of modern communication is absent.

The block of stone by which Muhsin Auliya is said to have come to Jhiari floating, is now beside the saint's tomb at Battali. It is in fact an inscription tablet having writings on it. It is now very much venerated by the Muslims and Hindus. Votive candles are generally burnt on this. This is also washed and the devotees drink the water with a view to bring immunity for them from dangers and illness. Enamul Haq is of the opinion that the inscription is in Persian language,¹ but half of the writings has been rubbed out owing to the touches of the people out of reverence and love to the saint. Dr. Haq in the year 1931 along with old and venerable literateur Abdul Karim Sahitya Visharad visited the shrine to examine the stone but he says 'with much difficulty, we tried time and again to read out the inscription but failed. And again by an expert of Indian Museum, Mr. Shamsuddin, we deciphered the following text of the inscription.'

the first line :

بتاریخ بیستم ماه شوال عابد مجذوب

Tran: On the twentieth ^{Majdhub} Shawal 'Abid and Majdhub, 800 A.H.-1397 A.D.²

From the fragmentary inscription it can be safely concluded that the saint Muhsin Auliya died in A.H.800/A.D.1397'.

Dr. A. Karim has also examined the inscription. He is of the opinion that the inscription is written in Arabic and is not at all in Persian language, because it is written in 'Tughra'.³ If however, the reading of

1. According to Enamul Haq, it is very interesting to note here, that the inscription was written in Persian language. We have not yet come across with any Persian inscription of so early a date as 800 A.H. From this point of view the inscription is a very interesting and important one. Enamul Haq, A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, p.255.

2. Ibid.

3. A. Karim, Chattagram Islam, pp.80-81.

Enamul Huq proves to be correct, Shāh Muhsin-Auliya becomes a contemporary of Shāh Badar. The evidence of the other traditions that he was a nephew of Shāh Badar also shows that he was a contemporary of Shāh Badar. Shāh Muhsin Auliya may therefore, be reckoned as one belonging to the twelve Auliya.

There are two more qabrs which are found adjacent to his Dargah. In the middle lies the grave of Shāh Sikandar and on the eastern side the grave of Nirmāi Bibi is situated. Every day people from every nook and corner of the country visit the shrine of this saint with deep love and respect and offer Fateha for fulfilling their own desires and wishes.

'Urs ceremony :- The annual 'Urs ceremony of this holy saint is held on the 6th of Asād of the Bengali year. Mahfil-i-Milād and the Quran Khānī is duly solemnised in an adjacent mosque. Qawwali-- a sort of Sima in Urdu and in Bengali is held outside the shrine. Many animals are brought by the devotees even from out-side the district and those animals are sacrificed during the 'Urs in order to feed the destitutes, devotees and the Visitors. Fateha is offered by the Muslims in the Dargah and the non-Muslims show their respect to the shrine by lowering their heads. Both Hindus and the Muslims attend the 'Urs ceremony with their deep reverence and devotion from far and wide. Besides, the 'Urs ceremony, hundreds of people visit the shrine daily to pay their homage to this great saint.

8). Shah Umar.

The shrine of this famous saint is situated in a small valley

lying on the east of thana Chakaryia. It is two to three miles to the east of the Arakan Road. There is a Kakara road¹ that leads to the shrine. There is a mosque over-looking to the shrine. A pond is also attached to the shrine. The Mazar, at present is roofed over by C.I. sheet, but a new pucca structure is being built.

Though the fame of this saint is very great and he is reckoned as one of the twelve Auliya of Chittagong, yet nothing definite is known about him except that he was a great missionary who preached Islam in the southern part of the district. According to Muhammad Enamul Huq, there is another Dargah in Noakhali in Pargana 'Umarabad, the Dargah is known as that of Hadrat 'Umar Shah. He is credited even by Hindu historians with an immense number of conversion. According to local tradition of Noakhali, a Persian Pīr by name, 'Umar Shah came to the district Noakhali and lived there in his boat, working miracles and making multitude of converts. It was at his instance that the emperor Muhammad Shah (1719-1748) settled the Parganah Umarabad with two brothers of Delhi - Aman Allah Khan and Thana Allah Khan at a very low revenue of Rs.289.² Enamul Huq further says that this 'Umar Shah of Noakhali and Shah 'Umar of Chittagong were the one and the same person. The scholar also thinks that Shah 'Umar of Chittagong was alive during the first half of the eighteenth century.³ But the people of Chittagong say that Shah 'Umar was of much earlier date. He came to

1. It is deemed that the name of the Union Kakara was named after Kakara who was probably the Chief of early Murang tribe.

2. The Journal, Mata Muhri, edited by S.K.H. Shabbir Ahmed, June 18th, 1984.

3. Dr. Enamul Haq : A History of Sufism in Bengal, pp. 256-257.

Chittagong some three to four hundred years ago. In ~~the~~ recently published monthly journal,¹ it is stated that while Hadrat Shah Jalal (R.A.) along with 360 (Three hundred sixty) companions came to Sylhet with the blessings of his maternal uncle for preaching Islam and waging war against the non-Muslims, Shah Umar came to Bengal in his company. It is also known that after freeing Sylhet from Gaud Govinda, Shah Jalal ordered his companions to spread out in Bengal to propagate Islam. Hadrat Shah Jalal came to Sylhet in A.D.1303,² and according to Ibn Battutah he died there in 1347 A.D.,³ "His chief followers were Ali, Prince of Yaman, Syed Umar Samar Qandi, Syed Ala al-din Baghdadi, Shah Kamal Yamani, Shah Gabru Afghani, Shah Junaid Gujrati, Arif Multani, Shah Gaud Qureshi, Makhdum Jafar Ghaznavi; Shah Helim al-din Narnuli, Hussain al-din Bihari, Nizam al-din Baghdadi, Syed Qasem Deccani, Muzaffar Bihari, Sharif Ajmiri and others".⁴ The aforesaid source speaks of one prince of Yaman and the other Umar Samarqandi. Not only that Shah Jalal asked his followers to go out to the interior districts of Bengal for preaching Islam and was also advised ^{them} to settle down at the places of their activity. This tradition makes Shah Umar a companion of Shah Jalal of Sylhet. If the tradition proves correct, Shah Umar may also be a contemporary of Shah Badar and the first conquest of Chittagong by Sultan Fakhr al-Din

1. Ibid.

2. Shams ud-Din Ahmad : Inscriptions of Bengal, vol, IV, p.25.

3. H.A.R.Gibb : Ibn Battutah; Travels in Asia and Africa, pp.268-70.

4. Syed Murtaza Ali : Saints of East Pakistan, pp.27-28.

Mubārak Shāh. So, Shāh Umar might have belonged to the twelve Auliya of Chittagong. The tradition further says that, after his arrival in the southern Chakaria, at the village 'Kakara', he (Shāh Umar) had to fight against the then King Bīr Kamal and while Bīr Kamal was defeated, Shāh Umar started living in a nearby dense forest.¹ In this village, there still exists the 'Bīr Kamalar Dighī', 'Maināmatir-Dighī' and 'Nyāmotir Dighī'. Many traditions are prevalent regarding these 'Dighis'. It is said that while Shāh Umar reached the village 'Kakara', two neighbouring villagers were proceeding towards the jungles for cutting bamboo. He called them and requested them to build for him a thatched house in exchange of money, but they did not pay any heed to it and went away towards the jungles. As soon as they entered into the jungles, there they saw a big tiger, and out of fear they were looking to and fro. When they turned their back, they saw Shāh Umar was standing behind them and asked the tiger to go away and at once the tiger fled. Later on, these two men apologised to Shāh Umar and with the help of other people, a small thatched house was built for him. It is further narrated that Shāh Umar was the king of Yaman and after renouncing the world, he favoured the companionship of Hadrat Shāh Jalāl (R.A.) to enkindle the light of Islam in this part of Bengal and to establish the truth of Islam he waged war against the infidels and preached Islam in this corner of Bengal. It is also said that long long ago people from Yaman came here in search of him. In A.D.1923,

1. Mata Muhri, edited by S.K.H.Shabbir Ahmed, 1st June, 1983, Chittagong, p.64.

Lal mian Tahsildar and the late Khādem Badiur Rahman built a semi-pucca structure over his grave.

In the light of the above sources, the view of Enamul Huq regarding the identity of Umar Shah of Noakhali and Shah Umar of Chittagong does not seem to be correct. Shah Umar of Chittagong seems to be a Sufi of much earlier date. In Chakaria, the village where the saint is lying buried, is named after him and is known as 'Umarabad'.

The local people speak of the following miracles of the saint Shah Umar.

(a). During the second world war, the high ranking military officials tried to build an air port on the southern side of the Mazar and survey was made on the spot. The local people made an appeal to the military officials to give up such idea in order to preserve the sanctity of the shrine, but the officials sneered at such an appeal. As a result on that very night one or two officials who initiated the plan became paralysed. Thereafter, they gave up the idea and selected another site for airport at 'Chiringa'.

In the year 1971 the Pakistan army proceeded to burn the nearby villages of the shrine. After going a little ahead, they refrained themselves from doing so and turned back.

People from far and wide attend the Mazar irrespective of caste and creed to have the blessings of the saint. The annual Urs ceremony is held on the 21st of P^halgun and people from various parts of the country attend Urs ceremony with utmost devotion and reverence. After Dhikr and Milad, Tabarruk is distributed amongst the people.

CHAPTER - IV

Sūfis of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries

1. Traditions about Bāyazīd Bistāmī :-

In the last chapter we have discussed the role of Bāra Auliya or twelve Auliya in the spread of Islam in Chittagong. It has been observed that the history of almost all these Sūfis of the early period is shrouded in mystery. Even the names of twelve Auliya are not definitely known. There is a famous dargāh on the Chittagong-Dhaka highway, at a place known as Kumira, about twelve miles from the Chittagong city. The dargāh is known as Bāra Auliya. In-side a walled-enclosure twelve small graves are found. The dargāh is widely venerated by the people, but no one can say as to who were the Sūfis lying buried there.

According to one tradition current among the local people, the Bāra Auliya, while coming to Chittagong, met there in an assembly, engaged themselves in meditation and then spread over different parts of Chittagong as per plan drawn up in the assembly. Traditions like this about other Sūfis are also available in different parts of Chittagong, the most important of them centre round two leading sūfis---Sultān al-ʿArefīn Hadrat Bāyazīd Bistāmī and Shaikh Farīd.

The dargāh of Bāyazīd Bistāmī¹ is situated in an extensive area, comprising of hillocks on one side and the valley on the other. The place is known as Naṣīrabad, situated about three to four miles to the north of old Chittagong town, but now included within the greater

1. See plate II(b).

Chittagong city. Naṣīrābād is now an important Industrial centre and with the development of the area, the dargāh complex has also been developed with modern amenities for the hundreds of visitors who come there daily to offer Fateha to the saint lying buried there. On the top of the hillock lies buried the saint, and in the valley there is a large tank containing a huge number of turtles, which are not only objects of curiosity but also objects of veneration to the visitors who try to propitiate them with various kinds of edibles like parched rice, banana, meat and fish etc. On the bank of the tank there is an old mosque in the Mughal style, which according to Ahmad Hasan-Dani was built in the reign of Aurangzib.¹ The mosque does not bear any inscription, but it is in a good state of preservation and still cater to the needs of the visitors for saying prayers. By the side of the mosque, a modern Wadū Khāna (place for ablution) has been built and there have also been erected several pucca structure called Musāfir Khāna to accommodate the visitors from distant places. From the side of the tank and the Musāfir Khāna a flight of stairs, also built in the modern period, leads the visitors to the top of the hillock where the grave of the saint lies. Originally the grave was in a small pucca house, but now the house has been extended on all side to accommodate male and female visitors separately and the Khādims in the front space looking like a reception room. The hillock stretches far to the west where are found many graves over-grown with

1. A.H.Dani: Muslim Architecture in Bengal, pp; 245-246, plate LXXXII, No.III.

jungles and old trees. These trees are also venerated by the people, because threads of different colours are tied to its roots and branches with a view to have their desired objects.

There is a general belief that the famous Iranian Ṣūfī, Sultān al-ʿArefīn Hadrat Bāyazīd Bistāmī is lying buried in this dargāh, and actually the whole area has been named Bāyazīd Bistāmī and the road in front is called Bāyazīd Bistāmī Road. The influence of the dargāh in the minds of the local people may be gauged from this fact. Sultān al-ʿArefīn Bāyazīd Bistāmī is a historical figure. He was born in Bistām in Iran and died in his native place in (261/875 A.D.). His mazar is also situated in Bistām.¹ So, it can be said with certainty that he could not have been buried at Chittagong. It is also very doubtful whether the great Ṣūfī of Iran visited Chittagong. We have shown in a previous chapter that Chittagong was conquered by the Muslims in about the middle of the 14th century. The Arabian Muslims had contact with Bengal even before that time, from the 8th - 9th centuries A.D. The Arab vessels used to ply all oceans in the East up to the Chinese coast and in this connection they also visited Chittagong, the Gate way of Bengal.² It is said that Hadrat Bāyazīd Bistāmī was a disciple of Abū ʿAlī Sindhī. It is not known whether Bāyazīd came to Sind to take lessons from his teacher or where both of them actually met. But if he came to Sind to meet his teacher, he might have made a visit to Chittagong, because in the 8th to 9th Centuries the Arabs had contact with Chittagong and merchant vessels must have kept contact between the Port of Debal in Sind and the port of

1. A.J.Arberry : Sufi-ism, p.54.

2. A.Karim : Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, p.16.

Chittagong in Bengal. But we can not be certain about this, because modern researchers have shown that Hadrat Bāyazīd Bistāmī used to stay at Bistām and there is no reference to his coming out of Bistām. Whether he came to Chittagong or not, the local people of Chittagong believe that the dargāh at Naṣīrābād is that of Hadrat Bāyazīd Bistāmī.

Besides local tradition, there are written references about the dargāh. The first in point of time, probably is that found in Eastern Bengal Ballads, known as Purva Banga Gītikā where it says that 'I pay respects to Shāh ^{and} Sultān of Naṣīrābād; Faithful Musalmāns come from different places (to pay respect to him)¹. Poet Muḥammad Muqīm in his Gul-i-Bakāwalī, a Bengali poem, calls him 'Shāh Sultān'.² None of these writers call the saint Bāyazīd Bistāmī, but they call him 'Shahāre Sultān' or 'Shāh Sultān'. Maulvī Hamīd Allāh Khān, the 19th century historian of Chittagong categorically says that Hadrat Bāyazīd Bistāmī did never come to Chittagong. He says

در آن حین بعضی از آوگان جهان نورد و سیاحان صحراگرد از فقر و مسکین
اسلام آمدند و بمقابلہ مشاہیر ہندوان و معابد مگھان مزارات و قبور باطلہ بنام
قبر یا آستانہ سلطان العارفتین یا نیز براطاسی قدس (اللہ سرہ السامی و حضرت
غوث الاولیاء عبد القادر جیلانی رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ کہ گاہی این بزرگان دین دار الکفر
نیامدہ بودند و امثال آن ساختہ و پرداختہ ذریعہ از راق و وسیلہ اجتماع
مردمان از تراہی و آفاق کردہ بودند کہ بتدریج سبب آمد و شد مسلمانان
ہم پیرا شد

3

1. Purva Banga Gītikā (Nurun Nahar, O, Kabarer Kathā), ed. D.C. Sen, quoted in Enamul Huq: A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, p.239.
2. Bangla Academy Patrika, Baisākh--Ashād, 1390, p.98.
3. Hamīd Allāh Khān : Tarīkh-i-Hamīdī, Calcutta, 1871, p.17.

Tran:- "In ancient times, a few travellers and tourists among the have-nots in Islam paid visits ^{to} ~~at~~ this place (Chittagong); and the saints like Ghauth al-Auliya Abdul-Qadir Jili, Sultan al-Arefin Bayazid Bistami who did never arrive at this land of non-believers, the land of Hindu temples and Buddhists-pagodas -- and in the name of the saint or grave of many other saints, some fake graves and shrines were built here --which served for the builders means for earning bread and a way to assemble the common people ---which in the long run served a good deal of reasons for Muslim visit over there".

Of the modern historians Muhammad Enamul Huq and Abdul Karim hold different opinions on the origin of the dargah. Since both of them give altogether new interpretation on the subject, we quote from them in extenso. Enamul Huq identifies Shah Sultan (Bayazid Bistami) of Nasirabad with Shah Sultan Balkhi of Mahasthanain Bogra district in Bengal. He writes, "Every one admits that the saint Sultan Bayazid Bistami did not die here; yet people do not hesitate to say that he came to Nasirabad at a time when the place was covered with dense forest abounded with wild animals, evil spirits and genii, and that he attained the saintly perfection and enlightenment here after a long time, spent in ascetic practices. The story told in connexion with the abdication of his royal life and with the preference of a saintly life to the royal one, is exactly the same as narrated in connection with Shah Sultan Balkhi of Mahasthanain Bogra. We hear of no Muslim saint who had ever set his foot on Indian soil before the

10th century A.D. There is no definite and convincing proof of the fact that there had been any Arab relations with Chittagong before that period. Under the circumstances, we cannot believe in the tradition of Sultān Bāyazīd Bistāmī's arrival at Chittagong before the beginning of the tenth century A.D. So far as we understand, Sultān Bāyazīd Bistāmī has been confounded with Shāh Sultān Balkhī. It is said that Shāh Sultān first landed on Sandvīp, an island in the Bay of Bengal near Chittagong. It is not at all improbable that he visited Naṣīrābād before he had been in Sandvīp. The similarity between the Bogra and Chittagong tradition and the improbability of Sultān Bāyazīd Bistāmī's arrival at Chittagong on such an early date as the 9th century A.D. lead us to identify Sultān Bāyazīd-Bistāmī of Chittagong with Shāh Sultān of Bogra. It is necessary to mention here that, our identification of Sultān Bāyazīd Bistāmī of Chittagong fame with Shāh Sultān of Bogra is further strengthened by a passing reference to the saint's name in one of the Ballads (vide Nurun Nahar-O-Kabarar Katha) of Eastern Bengal, where the following two lines occur in connection with the saint :

“নাসিরাবাদেতে মানি সাহায়ে সুলতান ।

দেশ বৈদেশ হইতে আইসে মুমিন মুসলমান ॥”

“I pay respects to Shāh Sultān of Naṣīrābād;
Faithful Musalmāns come from different places
(to pay respects to him).”

Here the name of the saint is Shāh Sultān instead of Bāyazīd Bistāmī. It fully resembles the name of the saint of Bogra”.¹

1. Enamul Haq : A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, pp.238-239.

Abdul Karim gives an altogether different interpretation, at once novel and thought provoking. He writes as follows:- "I have formed an opinion about the dargāh of Bāyazīd Bistāmī at Naṣirābād. I think, the dargāh is not of the famous Iranian Ṣūfī Sultān al-ʿArefīn Bāyazīd Bistāmī, but of some other ṣūfī holding the name Bāyazīd. This latter was such a man that he was a Ṣūfī and at the same time a Sultān, the word Sultān being used in the sense of a king. The Muslim Sultāns of Bengal were also called Shāh. It has already been quoted from the Nurun Nahar-O-Kabarar Katha, which says 'Nasirabadete Māni Shāhare Sultān' (I pay respects to Shāh and Sultān of Naṣirābād). In the history of the Muslim Sultāns of Bengal, we find that there was a political revolution in Bengal towards the beginning of the 15th century. The relevant facts may be stated as follows:

'One Hindu Zamīndār, Rājā Ganesh by name was appointed the Chief minister of Sultān Ghiāth al-dīn ʿAzam Shāh (1392-1410 A.D.). He (Ganesh) killed his master ʿAzam Shāh and placed on the throne his master's son Saif al-dīn Hamza Shāh (1410-1411 A.D.). A little later, Hamza Shāh was also killed by the conspiracy of Rājā Ganesh who now placed on the throne Shihāb al-dīn Bāyazīd Shāh, a slave of Hamza Shāh. After about two years Bāyazīd Shāh was also removed or killed. Now Ganesh himself occupied the throne and began to rule in his name. 'Alā' al-dīn Firūz Shāh son of Bāyazīd Shāh somehow fled and reigned for a brief period in south and east Bengal. Being disgusted of the oppressions

of Rājā Ganesh, Shaikh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam invited Sultān Ibrāhīm Sharqī of Jaunpur to invade Bengal. When Ibrāhīm Sharqī invaded Bengal, Ganesh surrendered to Shaikh Nūr Qutb 'Ālam and got his son Jadu converted to Islam and placed him on the throne. As a Muslim, Jadu took the name of Jalāl al-dīn Muḥammad Shāh and in this way Muslim rule was re-established in Bengal.

"In histories there are three traditions regarding the death of Sultān Shihāb al-dīn Bāyazīd Shāh : (1) he died a natural death, (2) He was killed by the conspiracy of Rājā Ganesh, and (3) Rājā Ganesh invaded and killed him. The last opinion is supported by the Arabic historian Ibn Ḥajar. It is our misfortune that no contemporary history of Muslim Sultanate of Bengal has been available. History of the period has been written on the basis of coins, inscriptions and chronicles written outside Bengal. Be that as it may, I think being disgusted of the oppressions of Rājā Ganesh, Shihāb al-dīn Bāyazīd Shāh fled to Chittagong, gave up his kingly robe and took the garb of darwish or actually achieved spiritual attainments. I also think that the dargāh of Naṣirābād is actually that of Shihāb al-dīn Bāyazīd Shāh; he was both a Shāh and a Sultān.

"The growth of the name of Naṣirābād should also be considered. After the supplanting the family of Ghiāth al-dīn Āzam Shāh (Ilyās Shāhī dynasty), the people of the family must have left the capital and spread over different parts of the country. One member of the family named Nāṣir went to the village and took to ac-

Later when the family of Ganesh was supplanted, the nobles found out Nāsir from the village and placed him on the throne. He was styled Nāsir al-dīn Maḥmūd Shāh. We think that the name Naṣīrabad was derived after the name of Nāsir al-dīn Maḥmūd Shāh. Might be that he or his ancestor escaped from the oppression of Ganesh and settled there. If the dargāh named after Bāyazīd Bistāmī is actually the dargāh of Sultān Shihāb al-dīn Bāyazīd Shāh, it will also show a relationship between Shihāb al-dīn Bāyazīd Shāh and Nāsir al-dīn Maḥmūd Shāh. There is no written account calling the dargāh at Naṣīrabad as that of Bāyazīd Bistāmī; Maulvī Hamīd Allāh Khān does not think that Bāyazīd Bistāmī is lying buried here. The poet Muḥammad Muqīm does not call him Bāyazīd Bistāmī, rather he says 'Shāh~~ane~~ Sultan', i.e. Shāh and Sultān. Only in the modern period the dargāh is called the dargāh of Bāyazīd Bistāmī. Modern people are not supposed to know that there was a king in Bengal in the 15th century named Shihāb al-dīn Bāyazīd Shāh and that he was killed by the machinations of a Hindu. After much research the historians have discovered the name of the King and his actual identity has been determined only a few decades before, so that when people knew that the dargāh is that of Bāyazīd, they took it for granted that the dargāh must be that of the famous Sūfī Sultān al-Arefīn Bāyazīd Bistāmī. In our country, even sometimes back, it was a practice of the Muslims to claim Iranian and Turanian origin and they felt proud of such origin or ancestry.

"Before concluding our discussion about the dargāh of Naṣīrabad, I deem it necessary to offer an explanation. The new light that I have tried to throw, is not definitely proved. There is no evidence to show that Shihāb al-dīn Bāyazīd Shāh was banished by Ganesh or he took shelter to some other place, particularly, Chittagong, from the oppression of Rājā Ganesh. Until such evidence is available, our this new theory will not be acceptable as historical truth. We have just indicated a possibility in the light of the evidence discovered so far. Future researchers may proceed bearing this new light in mind and if fresh evidence is discovered someday, I believe a significant historical truth may be unearthed."¹

There are therefore, three views put forward by three scholars regarding the dargāh that goes by the name of Bāyazīd Bistāmī. The first is that of Maulvi Hamīd Allāh Khān, who does not only deny the visit of Bāyazīd Bistāmī to Chittagong, but also denies the existence of the tomb of any saint in the dargāh. He thinks that the whole thing is a fabrication done by the fortune seekers in imitation of Hindu and Buddhist places of worship. His view does not seem to be correct: the scholar wrote his book in the middle of the 19th century, but the dargāh had existed even before his time. That the dargāh existed in the 17th century, is proved by the existence of the Mughal mosque in the dargāh complex. There is also an waqf property endowed for the maintenance of this dargāh in the Mughal period.² Enamul Huq's opinion that the Sūfī

1. Bangla Academy Patrika, Baisakh and Ashād, B.S.1390, pp.100-102.

2. Enamul Huq: A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, p.238.

in whose memory the dargāh has come into existence is no other than Shāh Sultān Balkhī. The saint is lying buried at Mahasthan in Bogra district, but he lived for some time at Chittagong and thus the dargāh has come into being. This view also can not be accepted because if both the saints were the one and the same person, there should have been similarity of names. The view put forward by Abdul Karim is also not very sound; the scholar himself states that the view is dependent on a few 'ifs'; unless these questions are solved, nothing can be definitely stated. But there are some other points which would probably support the view put forward by Abdul Karim. I have carefully noticed the 'qabr' inside the modern wall-enclosure; though the dargāh building has been renovated in modern time, the actual 'qabr' or the grave is still in its original shape. The sarcophagus or the qabr is in the same model as that of the tomb of Sultān Ghiāth al-dīn Āzam Shāh at Sonargaon.¹ I could not take a photograph of the sarcophagus, because the Khādims did not allow me to take a snap from inside the mazar. Secondly, the village connecting the dargāh is known as Sultān nagar. So it seems very probable that the dargāh had in the past some connection with a Sultān. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that Bayazīd Bistāmī did never come to Chittagong, nor does he have any connection with the dargāh which goes by his name. We feel that some other Ṣūfī of the early period, may be of the 14th or 15th centuries is lying buried there.

1. A.H.Dani : Muslim Architecture in Bengal, p.72. See also plate II(b).

he again knocked at his mother's door and asked her to receive him. His mother again behaved with him as before. This time being very much mortified, Farīd did a noble thing. He tied up his two legs with the branches of a tree, stretching his head towards the small valley where now lies the fountain, called 'Shaikh Farīder Chashmah'. In this condition he used to recite the name of Allah as he was determined this time either to die or to gain that divine gnosis which his mother desired him to attain. He was always weeping for the mercy of Allah and the tears of blood that were flowing down his eyes, are said to have caused the fountain to spring up.

In this way while Shaikh Farīd was passing his days through ordeals, one day a hungry crow perched on the same branch, to which his legs were tied up, and asked him for food. Farīd offered his whole body to the crow which pecked at it quickly but could not have even a small piece of flesh. The crow being thus disappointed complained to Farīd that he had deceived it by offering a block of wood instead of his body. Farīd being disappointed by the complaint of the crow, thought that he had nothing to satisfy his guest save his two eyes which were still soft. He requested the crow not to be dissatisfied with him and offered him his left eye. The crow ate the eye and flew away. Then another crow came and asked Farīd for food. He readily offered his right eye to it. The crow pecked it out, ate it and flew away satisfied. In this way when he lost his both eyes, he saw that he was seeing every thing in the world. He fully guessed this time that

the much longed for enlightenment and perfect knowledge had at last been achieved. Therefore, he made up his mind to see his mother. He untied his legs and returned home. On his arrival, he was astonished to see that the door of his mother's house was open for him. His mother understood that her son had attained the desired perfection (Kamāliyat). She came out of the house and received her son with warm affection.

Now at the order of his mother, Shaikh Farīd went to Hadrat Bu'Alī Qalandar to receive further training and to receive a Khilāfat from the saint, but he did not feel at home at his Khānqah. So Shaikh Farīd went to Qutub al-dīn Bakhtiyār Kākī (R.A.) and he attained his Khilāfat (agent) from him and while returning home to his mother, he met Nizām al-dīn, who was a dacoit but Shaikh Farīd showed him the right path; Nizām al-dīn afterwards became a prominent Darwish who shun the evil ways of life he adopted, for ever. After that Shaikh Farīd came back to Chittagong and dedicated himself to the preachings of Islam.¹

The above tradition, especially the first portion relating to the long years of devotion in the forest and offering his both eyes to the crows, ~~and~~ often heard from the local people of Chittagong. The fountain which is named after him still exists. But the last portion i.e. his visit to Bu'Alī Qalandar and Bakhtiyār Kākī and the story of the

1. Dr. Enamul Huq : A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, p.241.

decoit Nizām al-dīn turning to be a saint, is certainly a fabrication by modern scholars. Enamul Huq identifies Shaikh Farid of Chittagong with Bābā Shaikh Farid al-dīn Shakarganj of Pakpattan. He writes 'As for the identification of Shaikh Farid there are differences of opinion among the people of Chittagong. The tradition noted here is taken from the version of the illiterate, who do not care for the identification of the saint. But the educated Muslims are of the opinion that this Shaikh Farid was the famous Persian saint Faridu'd-Din 'Attar who died in the year 1230 A.D. Unfortunately, we are unable to share with their views, for reasons already referred to. According to the tradition, this Shaikh Farid was the spiritual guide of Nizamu'd-Din Auliya (1236-1325 A.D.). The following two lines of Eastern Bengal Ballad (vide P.V.G.Nurun Nahar-O-Kabarar Katha), supports the tradition taken down by us

'তাব্বল্লি মা নি আমি ককির সেক করীদ ।

নেজাম উলিয়া মানস জন সাহাবিদ' ।।

"Then I pay my respects to the saint Shaikh Farid : (Besides) I pay my respects to Nizamu-'d-Din Auliya who was his disciple". In the tradition, we see that Shaikh Farid was contemporary with Bu'Ali Qalandar (d.1324 A.D.) and a disciple of Qutbu-'d-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki (1142-1236). Under the circumstances we do not see any reason, how Shaikh Farid of Chittagong can be identified with Shaikh Farid-'d-Din 'Attar of Parsia ? This Shaikh Farid was no doubt Bābā or Shaikh Farid -'d-Din Shakar Ganj who died in 1269 A.D. and was buried at Pak Pattan

in the Punjab. He was a disciple of Bakhtiyār Kākī and spiritual guide of Nizam~~at~~-Din Awliya of Delhi.

“However, it seems likely that Shaikh Farid-'d-Din Shakar Ganj once came to Bengal. We have, just now identified his connection with the fountain called 'Shaikh Farider Chashmah'. There are many other fountains in the town of Chittagong nearby this one; but they are not associated with Shaikh Farid in the same way. Apart from this, there is a tradition still current in some parts of the district of Faridpur that the name of the district and town of Faridpur was given after the name of Shaikh Farid, who once visited the district and converted the people to Islam. A small tomb, which was probably made to commemorate the name and activities of the saint, is still seen in the town of Faridpur. Both Hindus and Muslims give offerings to it in fulfilment of their vows. The Wahhabī movement of Faridpur has now much reduced its influence on the Muslim community.”¹

Shaikh Farid al-Dīn Masūd Shakarganj was a famous Sūfī of the Indian Sub-continent belonging to the Chishtiya 'Silsila' or Tariqat established in India by Khawja Muīn al-Dīn Chishtī Sijjī (R.A.) who is known as Sultān al-Hind: His Principal Khalīfa was Khwajah Qutub-al-Dīn Bakhtiyār Kākī (R.A.) who was a Shaikh al-Islām during the reign of Sultān Shams al-dīn Iltutmish and in honour of his name the 'Qutub Minār' is named. His chief Khalīfa was Shaikh Farid al-dīn Masūd Shakarganj and his chief Khalīfa was Nizām al-dīn Auliya (R.A.)

1. Enamul Haq : A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, pp.242-243.

who is well known as Mahbub-i-Ilāhī and whose prominent Khalīfā was Nāsir al-dīn Mahmūd Chirāg-i-Dehī (Light of Dehī). The names of these Sūfis are famous in the cultural and social history of the Indian Sub-continent till to-day. Owing to some political reason, during the time of Shaikh Nizām al-dīn Auliya, the Chishtiyah Tarīqa was spread throughout the whole sub-continent. While Sultān Muḥammad bin-Tughlaq became very much furious against the Ulamā and the Sūfis, then many of the Sūfis, who were totally devoid of worldly vanities, left the capital city of Dehī for far-flung places. Again Muḥammad bin Tughlaq shifted the capital from Dehī to Devagiri, as a result, for fear of going to Devagiri, many Sūfis, according to their choice migrated to many other places. Moreover, it was also found that in many places where non-Muslim majority existed, Muḥammad bin-Tughlaq sent many Sūfis for preaching Islam there. One of the eminent disciples of Nizām al-dīn Auliya -----Akhi Sirāj al-dīn Uthmān returned to his native place Bengal and Shaikh 'Alā'-al-Haq became his disciple. Many Sūfis were born in the family of Shaikh 'Alā'-al-Haq and through their influence, the Chishtiya Tarīqah gained ground in Bangladesh.¹ It should be mentioned here that Nizām al-dīn Auliya (R.A.) was never a dacoit, if there is any truth in the statement that Shaikh Farīd turned a dacoit named Nizām al-dīn into a saint it must refer to another Nizām al-dīn, might be an insignificant person and that he had no connection with Mahbub-i-Ilāhī (Beloved of Allah) Nizām al-dīn Auliya of Dehī.

1. A.Karim : Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, pp.101-105.

The question of Farīd al-dīn Attār's coming to Chittagong does not arise at all. The question of Farīd al-dīn Shakarganj's visit to Chittagong is also unacceptable. The life sketch of Shaikh Farīd al-dīn Shakarganj of Ajodhan (Pakpattan) is known through authentic sources like Tadhkira and Malfūzāt literature. A brief life-sketch of the saint is also given by Khaliq Ahmad Nizāmi.¹ According to Nizāmi, Shaikh Farīd al-dīn Shakarganj was born in a Qādī family of Kahtual near Multan in 1175 and died at Ajodhan in 1265 A.D.² He is lying buried at Pakpattan in modern East Punjab. Chittagong came under the Muslim rule in about 1340 A.D. i.e. about 75 years after the death of the saint. It seems, therefore, impossible for him to come to Chittagong.³ It is also doubtful whether he at all visited Bengal. Uptil ^{his} death only a small portion of Bengal was occupied by the Muslims-----the Eastern, Southern and South-Western Bengal remained outside the Muslim domination.⁴ The biographical sketch of the saint so far known, shows that he never visited Bengal. In the Rāhat al-Qutub, the Malfūzāt of Shaikh Farīd al-dīn Masūd Shakarganj compiled in 655 A.H./1265 A.D. by one Nizām al-dīn quotes a reported statement of Shaikh Farīd that he was present at the time of the death of Shaikh Jalāl al-dīn Tabrizī. The saint is further reported to have said that Shaikh Jalāl al-dīn Tabrizī was smiling at the time of dying. Some one asked, 'How is that a dying man smiling' ? 'It was replied that

1. Khaliq Ahmad Nizāmi : Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the 13th century, pp.191ff.

2. Ibid, p.191.

3. A. Karim: Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, pp.26-29.

4. J.N. Sarkar : History of Bengal, vol. II, pp.226-227.

it was the sign of Knowledge into the mystery of Allah'.¹ But the place of death of Shaikh Jalāl is not definitely known. Different scholars state different places as to the grave of Shaikh Jalāl, such as Aurangabad in the Deccan, Bandar Dev Mahal (identified with the Maldives islands) or Dia in Gujrat,²

Gujrat.² Muhammad Abdur Rahim thinks that Shaikh Jalāl lies buried at Deotala in Malda (India, West Bengal).³ It is therefore, not possible to say definitely the place of death of Shaikh Jalāl-al-dīn Tabrizī and where Shaikh Farīd al-dīn Shakar Ganj attended him during the time of his death. If Shaikh Jalāl died at Deotala, as opined by Dr. Rahim, Shaikh Farīd al-dīn Shakar-Ganj may be taken to have come to Bengal. But even then his visit to Chittagong can not be satisfactorily established, because Islam penetrated to Chittagong long after the death of Jalāl al-dīn Tabrizī.

Moreover, the tradition regarding Shaikh Farīd of Chittagong shows that he spent twelve years in getting formal education and thirty six years in spritual education. If he started his education at the age of 8/9 years, he must have reached the age of over fifty by the time he completed his education. The tradition would have as believe that he was in Chittagong all these years and only after completing

1. Rāhat al-Qulūb, p.46, quoted in Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, vol.VIII, Part-III, July, 1960, p.214.

از معرفت شیخ جلال الدین حکایت فرمود که وقت او حاضر بودم - چون حضرت جلال الدین از جهان رحلت نمود در تبسم بود پس فرمودی نزدیکی شد پس فرمود که من در آن تبسم جیت که گفته که نشان معرفت خدای عزوجل چنین است -

2. Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, vol.VIII, Part-III, July, 1960, pp.215-216.

3. Ibid, p.218, Deotala is now a village 22 miles from old Malda town and 15 miles north of Pandua, on the Malda-Pandua-District-Dinaipur road.

education he went to Dehli to accept the discipleship of Shaikh Qutub al-din Bakhtiyar Kaki. The life sketch of Shaikh Farid al-din Masud Shakarganj shows that he was born in a Qadi family of Multan and he was all along in Ajudhan. Even if his visit to Bengal to attend the death of Shaikh Jalal Tabrizi proves to be true, his visit was short and temporary one, which is against the main theme of the tradition current at Chittagong. So, we come to the conclusion that Shaikh Farid of Chittagong can not be identified with the famous Chishtiya saint of Northern India, Shaikh Farid al-din Masud Shakarganj. Poet Muhammad Khan's genealogy shows that his ancestors from his mother's side belonged to a family of saints. The genealogy is given below :-¹

Maternal side :-

- 1). Shaikh Sharif al-din,
- 2). Qadi Alam,
- 3). Mir Qadi,
- 4). Khan Qadi,
- 5). Shaikh Hamid,
- 6). Baba Farid,
- 7). Hamid Alam,
- 8). Shah Nasir al-din,
- 9). Pir Mukarram Shah Abd al-Wahhab,
- 10). Shah Ahmad.

1. Shahitya Patrika, 8th year, First edition, B.S., 1371, pp. 240-241.

In this family there is one Shaikh Farid, who is the 6th lineal descendants of Shah Sharif al-din who was one of the twelve Auliya of Chittagong. Now if Shaikh Sharif al-din lived in 1340 A.D. (date of Shah Badar and the conquest of Chittagong by Sultan Fakhr al-din Mubarak Shah), his 6th lineal descendant might have lived in 1490 A.D.¹ or there about, taking 25 years for each generation. We think the Shaikh Farid of the tradition should be identified with Shaikh Farid of the poet Muhammad Khan's genealogy. So, Shaikh Farid is a local Sufi who has nothing to do with the famous Chishtiya Sufi, Shaikh Farid Masud Shakarganj.

3. Shah Chand Auliya

The dargah of this saint is situated on the bank of the Srimati canal at a distance of about one and a half a mile from the Patiya Police Station. The saint is rackoned amongst the 'Twelve Auliya' of Chittagong. The tomb was formerly within a small house but very recently it has been demolished and a modern pucca structure is being built with a dome over the shrine.¹ There is a mosque and a tank by the side of the tomb. The tomb is at present situated a few yards ~~far~~ off from the Arakan Road on its western side. A few years ago, a fulfledged Kamil Madrasah has been established after his name (Shah Chand Auliya 'Alia Madrasah). The very name of the saint is derived from Persian words 'Shah' and 'Chand'. The word Shah is used for monarch in Persia, but in this sub-continent 'Shah'

1. Plate III (a).

is a title for Darwishes and saints. Chānd (چند) is also a Persian word meaning a few. Therefore, Shāh Chānd Auliya (شاه چند اولیا) means a few Auliya i.e. he is reckoned as one of the few Sūfis. Therefore, we are still in dark about his real name, but he is considered to be one of the twelve Auliya of Chittagong.

It is said that Shāh Chānd Auliya was a confirmed bachelor and he was leading a saintly life indisguise at a certain place in Dehli. At that time a lady of the royal family was very anxious to get a husband after her liking. She waited long but none was found upto her choice. On this she became very much worried and became disgusted with her life. One day, she visited the saint to know of her fate and she became more perplexed when the saint told her that it was beyond her fate. On this the princess pressed upon the saint to marry her. He tried to avoid her cleverly. Inspite of this when the pressure went on increasingly, he ran away from Dehli to Bengal. According to Dr. Enamul Haq, the first place where the saint stopped for sometime in Bengal was Chāndpur (now district) situated on the bank of the river Meghna. Then he successively visited Chāndpur in Sitakunda, Chāndgaon near Chittagong town (now included in the city), Chāndpur on the bank of the Shankha river in Banskhalī Upa Zila and the places lying on both sides of the streamlet Chānd Khālī in Patiya. As all these places lying on both sides are associated with this great saint, they are called after the name of the saint. When he settled permanently in Patiya the importunate lady followed him there. Shortly after her arrival at Patiya, the saint died and the lady, with her

1. Enamul Haq: A History of Sufism in Bengal, p. 258.

retinue whom she engaged to serve her on her way to Bengal, determined to live there as the 'Khādimah' or a female attendant of the saint's tomb.

According to another tradition, the princess did not sit idle at Dehli after the saint had left the place. She wandered and tried to find out the saint. At long last she came to Bengal and ultimately reached Patiya. Her name is said to be Adinabibi. She built a small palace to live nearer the saint just a few yards away from the Khanqah of the Saint. The remnant of the palace is still found in the area and the local people still testifies to the fact that this was the palace built by Adinabibi who fell in love with the saint. From here she used to send for the saint his daily food through her servant but the saint did never use those foods, but threw away the same in the nearby small pond called Adinabibi's pond. The Princess was quite unaware of this and one day, she sent a message to the saint through her maid servant to marry her (the Princess) in exchange of her services rendered so long. The saint just asked the maid servant to take away the food served to him from the pond and to her utter surprise, the maid servant found all the food served as fresh as they had been served. She hurried to the Princess with those foods. It is said that, that very moment, the saint covered himself with a bed sheet and died. A few days later, Adinabibi also died. According to the local tradition, Adinabibi's pond bears some miracles. The water of the pond neither increases nor decreases but remains steady throughout the year inspite of seasonal changes.¹

1. This is observed by the writer personally.

CHAPTER - V

Sūfis of the 17th Century

1. Shah Pīr

The shrine of this saint is situated in the Satkania Police station now in the Lohagara Upazila, Chittagong. Within a distance of two or three miles of the dargāh, there is a great market, named 'Darwisherhāt' and local people say that this market or Bāzar was named after the saint. According to tradition, his real name was Muhammad Yūsuf and he was a prince of Dehli. After renouncing worldly life, he got himself trained in Sūfism and after severe endurance and meditation in asceticism, he became a great Sūfī. We know of a Great Indian saint named Shah Pīr, whose shrine is found in Meerut in the Uttar Pradesh (United provinces), India. The Queen Nur Jahān built the shrine of the saint, and the saint is said to have died in 1632 A.D.¹

Enamul Haq is of the opinion that the Shah Pīr of Meerut and that of Chittagong is one and the same person.² According to him the Shah Pīr of Meerut might have come to Satkania in Chittagong but he did not prolong his stay there, but went back to Northern India and was buried in Meerut. Materials at our disposal do not warrant either to prove or disprove the view of Enamul Haq. It is not impossible for the Sūfis of one place to go elsewhere but it is at the same time a little doubtful as to whether a Sūfī of Dehli came as far east as

1. Enamul Haq : A History of Sūfi-ism in Bengal, p.256.

2. Ibid., p.256.

Satkania and returned again to his home land. Moreover, Shāh Pīr does not seem to be a proper name, both the words signify a saint. The probability is, therefore, very great that this Shāh Pīr is a different person than the Shāh Pīr of Dehli. One or more Ṣūfīs might have been ^{with} the same name. However, if Enamul Haq's view proves to be correct, Shāh Pīr's date may be fixed in the 17th century.

'Urs:- In the past 'Urs accompanied by devotional music, took place on the 11th day of Jamādī al-thānī every year. Devotees used to sacrifice cattle, sheep and other domestic animals on the occasion. The ceremonial music was performed in accompaniment with musical instruments and dances shared by both sexes. But the dauntless initiative taken by a renowned social worker and Pīr named Al-hāj Shāh 'Abd-al-Jabbār¹ with the assistance of local people those anti Islamic performances have been prohibited since last four to five years. In place of music and dances, Mahfil-i-Milād is held on the scheduled date and the Pīr Saheb presides over the Mahfil. After Milād sweets are distributed amongst the people.

(2). Shāh Mullāh Miskīn (R.A.)

The shrine of this saint called Mullāh Shāh Takiyah is situated on the top of a hillock of Chandanpura under the Chittagong Municipal Corporation. Just below the shrine runs the Chittagong College Road (Now Enamul Haq Road). On the top of the Hill, just to

1. Maūlānā Shāh 'Abd-al-Jabbār, President 'The Anjuman-i-Ittihad and Pīr Saheb of Baīt al-Sharaf, Chittagong.

the west of the hillock centering the Mazār Islamic Intermediate College (now renamed Muhsin College) is situated. At the northern side, Chittagong College and on the eastern side Kazem 'Ali High School are situated and the southern side of the shrine is covered by a grave yard. It was formerly believed that Shāh Mullāh Miskin belongs to the Pre-Mughal period. Muhammad Enamul Huq writes as follows: "The old shrine of this saint called 'Mullāh Shāh Takiyah' is on the top of a hillock within the Chittagong Municipal area.¹ It is said that he came to Chittagong a few years after Badar Shāh with a number of darwishes known as Shāh Nūr, Shāh Ashraf Kābulī ^{Bundlah} Shāh, /Rizā Shāh, and Shāh Mubārak 'Alī. The tombs of these saints are beside the tomb of Mullā Miskin Shāh. Near the tomb of this saint, there is an old mosque which looks like having been built during the pre-Mughal period from the architectural and structural point of view. Mullā Shāh Miskin, as the saint is generally called, might have belonged to the Pre-Mughal period like the mosque itself".²

Recently a farman has been discovered which shows that Shāh Mullāh Miskin flourished during the 17th century. The farman issued by the Emperor Aurangzib to Hajī Miskin is now preserved in the Chittagong collectorate. The farman is in a very bad state of preservation and the paper is brittle so that a good photograph could not be taken.³ The date may be read as 1103 A.H./A.D.1691, and

1. Plate III(b).

2. Enamul Huq : A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, p.257.

3. Photograph is attached at the end of the thesis.

was issued in the 35th year of the reign of the Emperor Aurangzib.

The portion that could be - deciphered is as follows :-

درین وقت میمنت عنوان فرمان و علیشان صادر شد که ہے آباد زمین
افتاده لائی ز رامت خازن ملحق که از پیرکنه حویلی چائگام مصاف بصوب
بنگال در وجه مدد و بخشش حاجی مسکین چاه و حسب ضمن مقرر باشد که
حاصل آنرا صرف نیست کند بپرداء بقاد دولت روز افزون سلطان
نماید باید که حکام و عمال و جاگیرداران و کورریان حال و استقبال
زمین مسطور چکبست تصرف او باز که از مرد اجلا و مطلقا بتخیر
و تبدیل مکن -

Trans:- "It was in a best of moments and the farman of His Majesty took air that the virgin lands over looking Chittagong in the Subah of Bengal. The pargana Haveli Chatgām being made cultivable, is given to the care of Hajī Miskīn as madad-i-maash and assistance. The resultant income of those lands be spent for day-to-day prosperity and endurance of the Sultanate (and his (Mullā Miskīn's) devoted blessings shall smooth the way to this goal). (Accordingly), the present and the future Hakims, the Amils, the Jagirdars, the Kororis chalking up their individual lands, shall surrender on registration to Mullā Miskīn and (against this order) no room for contrariety shall be left thereof.)

It may therefore, be concluded that Shāh Mullā Miskīn is not as old as Enamul Huq thought him to be. Rather, he flourished in the 17th

century in the reign of Aurangzib. The mosque adjacent to the dargāh of the saint can not be of the Pre-Mughal period. Architecturally it can not be placed before the Mughal period.

There is a great belief in Chittagong that Shah Mullāh Miskīn is particularly helpful to the students. The shrine is ^usurrendered by a number of educational institutions, two degree colleges, one Intermediate college, four high schools and one 'Alia Madrasah. Students invoke the blessings of the saint for doing good results in the examinations.

'Urs : The annual 'Urs of this great saint is held annually on the 15th of Muharram. The local people of Chittagong celebrates the 'Urs with due solemnity. The 'Urs is actually held from the Muslims' charity only. The devotees attend the 'Urs from all corners of the country. An exception is found in the 'Urs of this saint, unlike other saints of Chittagong. Only the Muslims are allowed to pay homage to the mazar of this saint. The devotees (مزارین) show their veneration strictly in accordance with Sharī'ah.

The 'Urs begins with Mahfil-i-Milād and Quran Khwānī all over the night. No Simā is held in this connection, although animals are sacrificed outside the Mazar, and food is distributed amongst the poor and the destitutes!

1. It is said that the descendants of Banda Ridā Shāh, a relative of Shāh Miskīn are still living at village Kadalpur, Upazila Raozan, Chittagong

(3). Shāh Gharīb Allāh (R.A.)

Shāh Gharīb Allāh is one of the prominent Sūfis of Chittagong. His shrine is situated at Dampara, northern side of the Port city of Chittagong. The shrine is on the hillock and at the foot of it, there is a great graveyard. The dargāh¹ is adjacent to a mosque which was built long after his death. At the northern side of the shrine now stands the new circuit House, the southern and a portion of western sides are covered by graveyard and the rest of the western side is covered by hills. At the foot of the eastern side of the Zakir Husain Road, there is the shrine of another eminent Sūfī, a great Maulānā, who was a teacher in the then Muhsiniā Madrasah in Chittagong. His name is Maulānā Muhammad Nādir, a resident of Dampara.

The shrine is a pucca structure and the plinth is full of mosaic having a big dome over the tomb. It is a modern construction; during our boyhood, the tomb was housed in a house of mud-wall, roofed over by C.I. sheet. The mazar is very much venerated by the people, specially the Muslims attend the shrine in large number on the days of religious festivals. Though he is considered to be one of the important and oldest amongst the Sūfis of Chittagong, his identity was for a long time unknown. His biography is not available in Tadhkira literature nor there is any of the source revealing his identity. A quite ^{a good} number of researchers tried their utmost to find out his identity but of no avail. The Asiatic Society of Pakistan (now Bangladesh) recently procured a photostat copy of Malfuz-i-Ruknī,

1. Plate IV(a).

a collection of discourse of Shāikh al-Islām Hadrat 'Ain al-dīn 'Abd al-Bārī, better known as Rukn al-dīn Ahmad Shattarī, son of Mu'īn al-dīn, son of Qutb al-dīn Shattarī, son of Shāh 'Ala' al-dīn.¹ The conversation or malfuzat was collected by one of his disciples, Pir Imām al-dīn Shattarī of Rajgir. The discourses collected in this manuscript were delivered during the period from 1104-1117/A.D.1692-1705. The saint died in 1117/A.D.1705-06.²

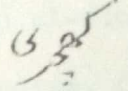
In one of his discourses the saint threw light upon Shāh Gharīb Allah of Chittagong. The discourse is given below :-

مجلس سیزدهم تاریخ هشتم ذی الحجه روز پنجشنبه شرف ملازمت حاصل شد -
 حاضران نقل شاه غریب که یک از مریدان آنحضرت بودند در چاتگان
 بر روی بختی آسوده است میکردند بعد خود فرمودند که ایشان بیره
 تبلیغ خان بوده اند نام ایشان روستا بود در اوایل نوکر شاهزاده
 داراشکوه بودند سبب ترک دادن دنیا و فقیر شدن ایشان این بود
 که چون شاهزاده داراشکوه شگفت خورد ایشان را بیره نوکران در اکبر آباد
 آورده نوکر پادشاه آوردند و ایشان تعانت بهادر خان کوکر
 که پادشاه شده بتعاقب داراشکوه شدند چون داراشکوه بقید آمد حواله نلان
 جماعت دار که شیخ روستا هم جماعت او بودند نمودند که داراشکوه را بر
 روز سواری برده سوار کرده همراه شده می آورد - از آن تاریخ که
 شاهزاده مذکور بقید شده از دست خود کجی بخت میخوردند اتفاقاً
 روزی هم تر بود کجی بر دقت بخت شده آن مرد سواری تیار نموده
 برد که شاهزاده را سوار کند -

1. From the text it appears that the saint Rukn al-dīn flourished in or in the neighbourhood of Patna, though there is no explicit reference about it (see Malfuz-i-Ruknī, Ms. pf. 63).

2. Malfuz-i-Ruknī, Ms. pf. 96.

ایشان مشغول به پختن کھجور بودند ساعتی توقف شد - آن مرد سخن ناسرا
که لائق حضرت بادشاهان نباشد گفت گرفت آخر شاهزاده جیسری ناخواره
سوار شد - میان روز و شب همراه آن مرد عقب استاده بودند که سخن ناملاک
آن مرد شنیدند بنحاطر ایشان رسید که سبحان الله بادشاه زاده باین شرکت
و دبیر در چند روز حال او بجائی رسیده که مردم سهل باین گستاخی ناسرا
و او عاجز تر بن بشر باشد ازین حال میان روز و شب را یک بروم زدگی بنحاطر نشست
دل از دنیا سر شد آخر بعد از چند روز آن جماعت دارمذکور را هم در اثناء راه از
خون ناسد شده در آن روز جان بحق تسلیم نموده میان روز و شب از همانجا شکر
نذاشته راه دیهات گرفتند در آنجا آباد ریزه آنجا هم استقامت نکردند چند بجای
نزد آمدند آخر این چار رسیده اخلاصی بفقیه پیر کردند اما بجای اعتقاد بهم رسانیدند
چند ماه محبت خانه صاف میکردند بکس معلوم نبود هر خبر متیکه بود بر غیبت بجای آورد
آخر در شغل سکر برایشان غالب شد حال دگرگون پیدا شد دیوانه وار از این جا برآمدند
روز چند غائب شدند - بعد از شش ماه روزی از دور نمودار شدند اما شناخته نمیدند
چون نزدیک آمدند سجده بجا آوردن گرفتند - یاران گفتند که صورت میان روز و شب
نماید گفتم باین شیخ روز و شب است یاران دویده بنکار کشیدند اما عجیب حالتی بود
سرو پا برهنه یک پا انجامه بود آنحضرت تا بنوازی رسیده بوسیده شده چون پیش آمدند
سکوه د زمین بوس نموده سه بیلوی را پیش نهادند که حضرت در خرب برداری این
بیلوی پیش من مانده بود - در زیر درخت مدفون نموده رفته بودم امروز باین
بعد فرمودند که آه این هم از شما است بکار شما باید بعد بر زبان مبارک رانند
که چند بجای از اینجا تا بنگال رفتند اما هیچ خبر ایشان معلوم نبود بعد وفات خبر
ایشان بتواتر رسید که آنجا بشاه غریب مشهور شدند - حافری عرض نمود که این لقب
هم حضرت داده بودند بهمان لقب خود را شهرت دادند مردم چاگانو را بر
مرد ایشان اعتقاد تمام است نزد و شیرینی بسیار می آرند ۱

'Eighteenth Majlis, dated 8th Dhi'l-Hijja, Thursday, 1104/11th August 1693, the audience of the saint (Shaikh Rukn al-din) was obtained. Those present were discussing about Shah Gharib who was one of the disciples of His Majesty (the saint) and who lies buried at Chittagong on the bank of the river (Feni). After that he (the saint Rukn al-din) himself said that he (Shah Gharib Allah) was the 'Nabirah' (grandson) of Qulj Khan. His name was Ruh Allah. In the beginning he was a servant of Prince Dara Shikoh. The reason of his renouncing the world and accepting an ascetic life was that when Prince Dara Shikoh was defeated he (Ruh Allah) and other servants came to Akbarabad (Agra) and entered into the service of the Emperor Aurangzib. They were attached to Bahadur Khan, the foster-brother of the emperor and went in pursuit of Dara Shikoh. When Dara Shikoh was imprisoned, he was put in charge of a Jamadar to whose party Ruh Allah belonged. They were to put Dara Shikoh on the saddle every day and bring him along to the imperial court. From the day he was imprisoned, Dara Shikoh used to take Khichri () cooked by his own hand. One day it so happened that the fire wood was wet and the Khichri could not be cooked in time. The man (Jamadar) got ready to put the prince on the saddle but he (the Prince) was busy cooking the Khichri. There was some delay and the man spoke words not worthy of princes. At last the prince rode without eating anything. Mian Ruh Allah stood behind him and heard the harsh words used by the fellow. It occurred to his mind that God is great in the Prince, inspite of his



grandeur and dignity had reached such a stage in a few days that ordinary people could speak with such impertinence and he (the Prince) remained the humblest of the humble. Thereupon Mīān Rūh Allāh became extremely perplexed, his heart turned away from the world. After some days the Jamādār was attacked with leprosy and died within a few days. Mīān Rūh Allāh left the company of soldiers and took the road to a village, reached Akbarābād (Agra) but he did not stay there. For some day he roamed here and there and reaching this place (Patna ?) he developed an attachment for the saint, (Shaikh Rukn al-dīn) till it reached the stage of his being a disciple. For some months he cleaned latrine and no body knew about it. He performed all services with devotion. At length devotional intoxication prevailed upon him and strange situation took place and he ^{came} out of the place (went away from this place) like a mad man. He disappeared for some time. After six months he was seen coming from a distance but he could not be recognised. When he came near, he began to prostrate himself. Friends said that he looked like Mīān Rūh Allāh. I (Rukn al-dīn) said, yes, he is Shaikh Rūh Allāh. Friends ran and drew him aside. But he was in a strange condition, he was bare-headed and bare-footed, there was one Paijama (trouser) but that too was so torn that it reached upto knee. When he came in front, he prostrated and kissing ground put three Bahlulīs (coins of the time of Sultān Bahlul Lōdī) before me (and said) 'Sir, these three Bahlulīs were left with me for expenses. I went away

burying them under the tree and to-day I have got them'. Then he said 'these were from you and have again come for your work'. After that, it came out of the auspicious tongue (of the saint Rukn al-dīn) that after some days he went from here (Patna ?) to ^{Bangalah,} ~~Bangladesh,~~ but nothing was known about him. After his death news reached that there (at Chittagong) he was known as Shāh Gharīb. One of those present asked, 'Was this title given by your August self (آپ) ? (The saint replied) that he was known by that name. The people of Chittagong venerate his grave, and present sweet meat and other articles (Nadhar)'.

'Malfūz-i-Ruknī' has mentioned the names of Dārā Shikoh and Qulīj Khān. After the defeat of 'Samugarh', Dārā Shikoh was, under the severe stricture of Aurangzīb, being searched by the commanders of the emperor. Dārā Shikoh, after roaming to and fro for some time, reached at a place, called 'Dadar', which was situated 9 miles away from the Bolan-Pass and took shelter to Malik Jiwan in the Afghān boarder. Once upon a time Malik Jiwan was sentenced to death by the Emperor Shāh Jahān, the prince then came to his rescue and on the intercession of the Prince, Malik Jiwan got his immunity from the death-sentence. Since then, the Prince had a firm conviction that the Prince should have a reciprocal treatment from Malik Jiwan during his adversary. But Malik Jiwan betrayed him and in A.D.1659 in between June 23rd and August 23rd Malik Jiwan made the Prince over to the hands of Bahādur Khān and Raja Jai-Singh the Generals of Aurangzīb.¹

In the same year in August 23rd, the captive Prince was taken to Dehli by Bahādur Khān. According to Malfūz-i-Ruknī, at that time,

1. For dates and other details about Dara Shikoh's fate see K.R.Qanungo; Dara Shikoh, Calcutta, 1935, pp.308-09.

Shāh Gharīb Allāh (known as Rūh Allāh) was the member of the retinue of Bahādur Khān. While the Prince was brought to Dehli, then he (Rūh Allāh) renounced the worldly life. Therefore, the date of his renouncement and his devotion towards ascetic life would be in between the captive life of Dārā Shikoh i.e. in between ~~A.D. 1659~~ of June 23rd and August 23rd, of A.D. 1659.

According to Malfūz-i-Ruknī, Rūh Allāh was the grand son of Malik Qulij ^{Khān}. We find three Mughal officers named Qulij Khān. During the reign of Akbar, Qulij Khān Andajāni¹ was a noble of the time. He was posted in many principal posts and also served as a Governor in many Provinces. In A.H. 1023/-A.D. 1614-15 he died². Amongst two of his sons, Mirzā Saif Allāh and Mirzā Chin-Qulij are mentioned in the Ma'āthir al-Umarā.³ Both of them were favoured with a high rank during the reign of Akbar.⁴ The second was Qulij Khān Khwāja 'Ābid⁵, the son of Shaikh Alam of Samarqand. He arrived in this sub-continent during the 29th year of Shāh Jahān's reign (1656-57). He served under Aurangzīb and gradually went on receiving promotion to the higher posts. In the 23rd year of Aurangzīb's reign (1681) he achieved the title of Qulij Khān.⁶ He (Qulij Khān Khwāja 'Ābid) died in 1685-86. His son Ghāzī al-dīn Bahādur Fīrūz Jang became a prominent noble of the Mughal court.⁷ Qulij Khān

1. For a biographical sketch see Ma'āthir al-Umarā, vol. II, Eng. Tr., pp. 534-539.

2. Ma'āthir al-Umarā, vol. II, Eng. tr., p. 537.

3. Ibid., p. 540.

4. Ibid., p. 539.

5. For his biographical sketch see Ma'āthir al-Umarā, vol. II, Eng. tr. pp. 539-545.

6. Ibid., p. 540.

7. Ibid. pp. 540-541.

Tūrānī was also a noble of Shāh Jahān's time. He died in the 27th year of Shāh Jahān's reign (1654) in Sindhaagar Doab at Bhera in his Jāgir.¹ Though he had no son but his son in-law Khānjād Khān received a 'mansab' in the Mughal court.²

As discussed so far, we find three Qulij Khāns ----Qulij Khān Khwāja 'Ābid, Qulij Khān Andjānī and Qulij Khān Tūrānī. Therefore, we shall try, so far as historical evidence are at our disposal, to identify as to who was Rūh Allāh's grandfather. Qulij Khān Khwāja 'Ābid can not be identified with Rūh Allāh's grand father, because he received the title ^{Qulij} Khān in 1681 i.e. 22 years after the capture of Prince Dārā Shikoh. Question may arise that by the time the discourse was delivered, Khwāja 'Ābid had already owned the title of Qulij Khān. But his Ghāzī al-dīn Bahādur Firūz Jang played an important role in the Mughal empire in the early 18th century, his grand son could not be a youngman in mid-17th century. The identification Qulij Khān Andjānī is not improper, though it seems rather unlikely that his grand son should have served as an ordinary attendant. The identification of Qulij Khān Tūrānī seems more likely; according to the Ma'athir al-Umarā, he had no son, but Rūh Allāh might have been a son of his daughter, because according to the Ma'athir al-Umarā, his son-in-law received a mansab after his death. Nabira (نَبیره) means both son's son and daughter's son. However, the question cannot be definitely solved with the meagre information.

1. Ibid., p. 543,

2. Ibid.,

The exact date of the arrival of Shāh Gharīb Allāh to Chittagong is unknown. The Malfuz-i-Ruknī says that after being unconcerned with worldly vanities, in 1659, Rūh Allāh (Shāh Gharīb Allāh) passed some time with Shaikh Rukn al-dīn Shattārī. The port city of Chittagong was brought under the Mughals by Shaista Khān in A.D.1666.¹ Therefore, it is possible that Shāh Gharīb Allāh came to Chittagong some time after 1666, though the movement of the Sūfīs and saints for preaching Islam does not seem to have ever been restricted in the Muslim period. The discussion referring to Shāh Gharīb Allāh is dated 11th August 1693.² Shāh Gharīb Allāh must have died before this date because the discourse refers to his death as a past event.

Finally there is the problem of locating his shrine. According to the Malfuz-i-Ruknī he is lying buried at Chittagong on the bank of the river Phani. The Feni river is the dividing line between the districts of Chittagong and Noakhali (but recently Feni got its identity as a new district, which was beforehand a sub-division under the Noakhali district). In the Mughal period also the Feni river was the western boundary line of Chittagong (Sarkar Islāmābād). So far we could gather, no saint of the name of Shāh Gharīb Allāh is known to be lying buried on the bank of the river Feni. Shāh Gharīb Allāh's tomb is found near the river (about two miles from the bank of the river) Karnaphuli. It seems therefore, that the Phani of the Malfuz-i-Ruknī is a mistake for Karnaphuli. However, this

1. J.N.Sarkar, History of Bengal, vol.II,p.375.

2. Quoted before at pp.91-93, note I.

problem cannot also be finally solved until fresh materials are available. It seems, however, very likely that Shāh Gharīb Allāh of Malfūz-i-Ruknī is the same as the saint of Chittagong bearing that name.¹

The Malfūz-i-Ruknī clearly says that Shaikh Rukn al-dīn belonged to the Shattāriya Sūfī order. He came of a family of saints who also belonged to the same order. As Shāh Gharīb Allāh was a disciple of Shaikh Rukn al-dīn it may safely be concluded that he (Shāh Gharīb Allāh) also subscribed to the same discipline, i.e. the Shattāriya order.

In the list of 161 orders furnished to S. Anderson by the Imperial Board of Darwishes at Constantinople,² it is called Madhhab-i-Shuttar (or Shattār) in the Khazīnat al-Asfiyā of Ghulam Sarwar.³ The order is mentioned by Abu'l-Fadl⁴ as one which provided his father with instructors, though he does not deal with it in his list of orders and he suggests that its head quarters in India were at Diwanpur. Allusions to it in Sūfī literature are rare.

Some notice of its doctrines is to be found in the Irshādāt al-Arifīn of Shaikh Muhammad Ibrāhīm Gazūr-i-Ilāhī, contemporary of Aurangzib.⁵

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1. In discussing about Shāh Gharīb Allāh of Chittagong, I have taken help from Prof. Abdul Karim's article 'Shāh Gharīb Allāh of Chittagong' in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, vol. xi, No. 1, pp. 73-80.
 2. Moslem World, 1922, p. 56.
 3. Khazīnat al-Asfiyā, Kanpur 1893, vol. ii, p. 306-08.
 4. Ain-i-Akbari, vol. III, Jarrett & Sarkar, p. 422.
 5. H. A. R. Gibb and J. H. Kramers: Shorter encyclopaedia of Islam, p. 534.

The following are the Chief ^{features} passages: "The sect of the Shuttari's dispenses with negation and adheres to affirmation. It is waste of time in Murākaba (Meditation) to attend to negation, for it is negating a nonentity. In the Shuttari religion there is no self effacement. There is nothing in it except "I am I". Tawhid is understanding one, saying one, seeing one, and being one. "I am one and no partner with me".¹

"With the Shuttari's there is neither opposition to Nafs, nor mudjahad; neither is ^{the} ~~there~~ fana' nor fana al-fana; for fana requires two personalities; one that is to be annihilated which is opposed to Tawhid. The Shuttari's affirm and observe the dhāt (ذات) with its sifat in all stages and tadjalliyāt (تجلیات).

"The Shuttari's do not complain, they eat whatever they get, keeping the real Gift-giver in view."²

Urs and devotional practices:- The Urs ceremony of this great saint, Shāh Gharib Allāh is held every year on the 28th Srāvan --- according to Bengali year. People from far flung areas of the country attend the Urs with due respect and reverence. The Urs begins with Mahfil-i-Milād and Qur'an Khawānī within the Mazar's enclosure. People irrespective of caste and creed pay their homage to the mazar of the saint. The Sima is also held with musical instruments both in Urdu and Bengali languages at the foot of the mazar. At the foot of the shrine many cattles, cows, sheep and goats are sacrificed to commemorate the day in a befitting manner feeding the destitute, the poor and all classes of people. The Dargah Committee manage the entire show in a disciplined way with keen fervour.

1. H.A.R.Gibb and J.H.Kramers: Shorter encyclopaedia of Islam, edited on behalf of the Royal Netherlands Academy, pp.533-534.

2. Ibid.

CHAPTER-VI

Sūfis of the 18th and 19th Centuries

(1). Shāh Amānat Allāh Khān.

According to Rashid Ahmad his name was Amānat Allāh Khān and his father's name was Niyamat. He was of Iraqi origin and was linked with the family of Hadrat 'Abd al-Qādir Jīlānī.¹ His forefathers migrated from Baghdad to Bihār. Shāh Amānat Allāh Khān migrated from Bihār to Chittagong at the instance of his Pīr Shāh 'Abd al Rahim. Shāh 'Abd al Rahim was a Kashmīrī and was the third lineal descendant of Khawja Māsūm and the fourth descendant of Imām-i-Rabbānī Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-Thānī Shaikh Ahmad Farūqī. In quest of a true religious guide, Shāh Amānat undertook journey to different places of Delhi, Kashmīr and Lucknow and at the end of his journey arrived in Murshidabād and took his Bai'at (oath of fealty) on Shāh 'Abd al-Rahim.²

Shāh Amānat of Chittagong is one of the most famous and renowned Sūfis of the area. He is lying buried in a beautifully built mausoleum to the east of Lal dighī in the heart of Chittagong³ town. He is popularly known as Shāh Amānat or Amānat Shāh, though it is difficult to determine his full name or even his ancestry. In modern works, however, his name is given as Amānat Allāh Khān and he is linked with the family of Hadrat 'Abd al-Qadir Jīlānī, popular as Bada Pīr Sahib in the region. Maulavī Hamīd Allāh Khān in his Ahādith al-Khawarizm writes as follows: "Marhum Shāh Amānat's Khanqah was situated at 'Lalkutī' near the eastern side of Laldighī. He was one of

1. Rashid Ahmad : Bānglā desher Sūfī Shādhak, p.25.

2. 'Ainun Zariyah, pp.18-21; M. 'Obaid al-Haq, Bangladeshir Pīr Auliya'ān, p.94

3. Plate IV,(b).

The celebrated saints and Mushaikhs of this region. The people of this area were his followers and devotees. Late Ṣūfī Muhammad Dāyem was his disciple but later on he returned to ʿAzimabād (Patna) and at Phulwarī Shāfī (of Jaunpūr) where he came across many saints and was favoured with their spiritual lessons. Allah knows best¹. Commenting upon the above observation of Hamid Allāh Khān, A. Karīm says, 'In the above quotation the historian Hamid Allāh Khān does not say anything about the origin or life sketch of Shāh Amānat; probably he was not aware of this. But it is evident from his observation that Shāh Amānat was alive before his time. Further it reveals from the statements of the descendents of Shāh Amānat that he was a descendent of ʿAbd al-Qāder Jīlānī, but his (Shāh Amānat) fore-fathers migrated to Bihār from Baghdad and made permanent settlement there (Bihār). Shāh Amānat and Shāh Muḥim Pakbāj of Bihār were both in good terms with each other. During Muslim rule, Bihār was the centre of Islamic Culture and learning. Most of the Ṣūfīs and darwishes established their Khanqāhs there. Therefore, it is not at all impossible for his (Shāh Amānat) fore-fathers to settle in Bihār'.² As regards the arrival of Shāh Amānat to the Port city of Chittagong, Mahbub al-ʿAlam says that Shāh Amānat replaced Shāfī Shāh alias Badnā Shāh in the wilāyat of Chittagong. The English Judge sent Muhammad

1. Hamid Allāh Khān : Ahādith al-Khāwānīn or Tarikh-i-Hamidi, pp.208-209.

و شاه امانت مرحوم که خانقاه او نزدیک به لعل کوئی سمیت شرعی تالاب لال دیگی
بود - از مشایخ او لیاض و مشایخ خانقاه نشین این دیار ببلد استبر بود و مردمان
را عیان زمان سید و محقق او بودند - صوفی محمد دایم مرحوم اولاً از میران
او بود - بعد از آن بعظیم آباد و پهلوانی رفته ارادت بشیخ آنجا آورده
بود و الله اعلم -

2. Abdul Karim : Chattagramē Islām, p.89.

Jum'a prayers in the Qadam Mubarak Mosque built by Yasin Khan.¹ Shah Sufi Amanat Khan also used to say his prayer there. Outwardly, Shah Amanat was leading an ordinary life, attending to his duties in the court but actually he was possessed of uncommon spiritual power and in the spiritual world, he was holding the wilayat in Chittagong.

It is very difficult to determine the date of arrival of Shah Sufi Amanat Allah Khan to Chittagong. In the absence of the contemporary sources, let the question be decided with the aid of other sources. In the context of the statements made above by Historian Hamid Allah Khan, it seems that Shah Amanat might have been present in Chittagong long before the publication of his book---Tarikh-i-Hamidi. Presumably the historian did not see Shah Amanat or even if he saw, might have seen him in his infancy. Hamid Allah Khan completed his book Tarikh-i-Hamidi in Hijra 1273/ in A.D.1853. The book was printed from Calcutta in A.D.1871.² Therefore, in view of the circumstances, it appears that Shah Amanat might have come to Chittagong in the later part of the 18th century and lived a few years in the beginning of the 19th century.³

Besides, with the help of other sources, the probable timing of Shah Amanat can be determined. Mahbub al-Alam says that as soon as Muhammad Shafi' (nick name Badna Shah) died in the prison, Shah Amanat arrived in Chittagong.⁴ In another place he says that Muhammad Shafi'

1. Ibid, p.317.

2. Hamid Allah Khan : Tarikh-i-Hamidi, Introduction, p.3.

3. A.Karim; Chattagram Islam, pp.90-91.

4. Mahbub Al-Alam: Hadrat Sufi Amanat Khan, p.5. But this cannot be correct, because as will be seen presently in our discussion about Shafi' Shah and Badna Shah, Shah Amanat flourished earlier than Shafi' Shah.

mostly used to reside in Suluk Bahr along with Danish-Pandit and both of them were contemporary. Muhammad Muqim, the author of Gule-Bakawali referred to Danish Pandit in the following words:¹

শহর উত্তরে ছলক বহর মৈদান
মোহাগুন বশু এক আছে সেইস্থান ।।
মোহাম্মদ দানিছ নামে বুদ্ধি পরবল ।
গুনবশু মোহাবির প্রাত্ৰ আলাওল ।।
তানির মুরিদ দির্কভাবে পরতেক ।
শরিয়ত সুসিহিতে মোহাওর ছালেক ।।
অন্যে ২ প্রতিবাসী আমি তথা জাই ।
নানা পরশাব পরিবক্ষিত একধাই ।।
তান পদ বমসফারি লই শূত বিধি ।
সাগরে আপিলুং প্রতু পেক হত্র জদি ।।

" At Suluk Bahr to the north of the city, there lives a very learned man named Muhammad Danish. He is very intelligent and profound^{by} learned almost equal to 'Alaol. Everybody likes to be his murid and he is a follower of Shari'at and he is a Salik (seeker of marifat). Like others, I also go there and discuss many things with him. Touching his feet I jump into the sea hoping that God will come to my aid'. (By jumping into the sea the poet was referring to composing his poem Gul-i-Bakawali).

It appears from the above that Danish Pandit was a contemporary of Muhammad Muqim and that he was much senior to the latter. Danish Pandit was a scholarly person and if according to Mahbub al-'Alam Muhammad Shafi Shah was a friend of Danish Pandit, he was also senior to the poet Muhammad Muqim. Muhammad Muqim wrote his Gule-Bakawali

1. Bangla Academy Patrika, dated, Baisakh, pp.91-92, Ashad, B.S.1390.

sometime before 1826 A.D.,¹ may be towards the beginning of the 19th century and Dānīsh Pandit may, therefore, be taken to have been living towards the beginning of the 19th century. Muhammad Shafi who was a friend of Dānīsh Pandit, may be senior to him, may therefore, be taken to have been living up to the end of the 18th century A.D. On this analogy it may also be stated that Shāh Amānat came to Chittagong towards the end of the 18th century.

There are other circumstantial evidence which also help us in determining the probable date of Shāh Amānat of Chittagong. They are now discussed below. (1) There is no doubt that Shah Amānat, on coming to Chittagong accepted a very ordinary appointment in the Judges' court and at that time the Judge was an English man. The Shah was either a peon or a Pankha-puller (puller of country made fan), majority are of the opinion that he was a Pankha Puller. In those days where there was no electricity, all important offices had the country made fans which had to be pulled by men. Chittagong was occupied by the English in 1760 A.D. when the district was ceded to the English by Mir Qasim along with Burdwan and Midnapore.² But in 1760 A.D. the English received only the revenue-collecting authority; the English Judge was appointed much later. In the Mughal period the Faujdars tried the criminal cases and 'Amils used to try the cases of civil and revenue matters.³ In 1772 A.D. the English East India Company for the first time reformed the Judiciary and entrusted the duty of trying

1. Ibid. p.87.

2. A. Karim: Chattagram Islam, p. 92.

3. Ibid. :

civil cases to the English collectors. In 1781 A.D. the English appointed separate Judges for trying civil cases, but the Judicial system was reformed mainly after the introduction of permanent settlement in 1793 A.D.¹ From this time onward, separate Judges' court was established in each district and both civil and criminal Jurisdiction was given to the Judges. So, if Shāh Amānat was appointed a Pankha-Puller in the Judge's court, as is widely known, he must have come to Chittagong in and around the closing years of the 18th century. He must have accepted an appointment in the Judges' court after 1781 A.D. at the earliest and definitely after 1793 A.D.

It will be seen later that one 'Abd al-Wahhāb, a pleader at the Judge's court in Chittagong received blessings from Shāh Amānat and it is at the latter's blessings that the former became a rich man. The same 'Abd al-Wahhāb built a mosque in his village at Harin Khain in modern Patiya Upazila. The mosque still exists in a ruined condition and it also bears an inscription which is dated A.H.1222/ A.D.1807.² A study of the Karamat no.(c) of Shāh Amānat discussed hereinafter probably proves that Shāh Amānat was living in 1806 i.e. during the time the mosque was built.

Shāhzāda Anwār Khān who claims himself to be the son of Shāh Amānat endowed property for the maintenance of the dargāh of Shāh Amānat, and the endowment deed is dated 11 Baisākh of 1202 Maghī/ 1841, corresponding to 1841. It may be supposed that Shāhzāda Anwār Khān

1. Ibid.

2. A Photograph of the inscription (plate) is attached. The inscription and its date are not legible in Photograph, but I have personally examined the inscription in site and the date could be clearly deciphered by me. The text of the inscription is given later in this chapter. See plate V, (a).

endowed the property before his death. So if Shahzadah Anwar Khan died after 1841, his father Shah Amānat must have died at least 20/25 years prior to this date. On this analogy it may be assumed that Shah Amānat passed this world some time around 1815-1820.

From the above discussion, we may deduce the following points regarding the life-sketch of Shah Amānat Allāh Khan of Chittagong.

- a). Shah Amānat was a descendant of Hadrat Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir Jīlānī.
- b). Shah Amānat's fore-fathers migrated from Irāq to Biḥār and settled there.
- c). Shah Amānat came from Biḥār to Chittagong.
- d). Shah Amānat was living in 1806 A.D.
- e). Shah Amānat died sometimes before 1841 A.D., may be during the years 1815-20 A.D.

The saint Shah Amānat died on the 1st Dhul-Hajj and his 'Urs ceremony is held for three days every year from the 1st of Dhul-Hajj. Unfortunately, nothing is known about the Tariqah or Silsilah to which he belonged. As he is said to be a descendant of Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir Jīlānī, it may be supposed that he might have belonged to the Qādiriyyah silsilah. Though 'Abd al-Qādir Jīlānī is one of the earliest mystics in Islam and his silsilah is one of the earliest in the history of Ṣūfī-ism, his silsilah did not come to the Indian sub-continent until very late in the 17th century.¹ In spite of this late arrival, the Qādiriyyah silsilah is extremely popular in India, particularly in Chittagong, where the great Ṣūfī is respectfully called Bada Pir Sahab (i.e. the

1. K.A.Nizami : Op cit, pp.57-58.

Great Pīr or Pīran-i-Pīr). So, by the time, Shāh Amānat came to Chittagong, Qādiriyāh Silsilah became popular and so Shāh Amānat might have belonged to the Qādiriyāh silsilah. It is however, not a corollary that he should have accepted the Qādiriyāh tariqah, because he belonged to the family of that great saint. Be that as it may, it is known that Shāh Amānat's spiritual teacher was Shāh Abd al-Rahīm who was a descendant of Hadrat Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-thani. It does not however, follow ipso facto that Shāh Abd al-Rahīm or for that matter Shāh Amānat should have belonged to the Mujaddidiyah tariqat. In the absence of evidence we are not in a position to determine the Tariqat of Shāh Amānat.

The little that we know about the life-sketch of Shāh Amānat, shows that Shāh Amānat kept himself aloof from worldly things, he lived a very simple life. To keep himself away from the notice of the people, he accepted a very ordinary service, so that he could maintain himself and his family and at the same time devote himself to his esoteric exercises. It seems, therefore, that he did not care for worldly gains, in the tradition of early Sūfīs of Qādiriyāh, Chishtiyā or Mujaddidiyah silsilah. The present khadims of his dargah say that they follow all three, Chishtiyā, Qādiriyāh and Mujaddidiyah tariqahs. His primary life in Chittagong :- Generally the Sūfīs and walīs like to keep themselves concealed from the public eye lest the people keep them busy and keep them away from their devotion to God. This idea was also shared by Shāh Amānat and hence his attainments in the spiritual

field was unknown to the people. It was very much difficult to know and understand him. As the present Jamī mosque was turned into a magazine by the English for storing arms and amunitions as discussed earlier, Shāh Amānat used to say his Jumā and daily prayers at Qadam-Mubārak Yasin Khān mosque. He used to perform domestic works like an ordinary man. His profundity in the field of mysticism went un-noticed by so many eyes due to his simple and careful dealings with people and here lies his greatness as a sūfī in the divine galaxy of saints.¹

His miracles:- The spiritual attainments of Shāh Amānat did not go unnoticed by the people for long. Quite accidentally, his spiritual power (Kamaliyat) became known to the local people through a Karamat (or miracle) of un-common nature. A number of Karamat (miracles) of Shāh Amānat are known which are discussed below:-

a). While Shāh Amānat was serving as a peon or Pankha puller in the Judges' Court, Chittagong, a man of Sandwip (in another version Cox's Bazar or Maheshkhali) whose case was under trial before the Judges' court came to the city for shopping. /^{As} He had a case pending for trial in the Judge's court and since he happened to be in the city, he went to the chamber of his pleader to enquire about the position of the case. To his utter surprise, he came to know that the date of hearing was fixed on the following day. He also learnt that the pleader had sent information about it through mail which apparently he had missed. The man was at a loss as to what to do, as all the concerning

1. K.M.G.Rahman, Hadrat Bayazid 'O' Shāh Amānat, p.146.

documents were lying at his village home. At first the man charged the pleader for not communicating to him the date fixed for the case well in advance. The pleader however, appologised for such a mistake and the man in consultation with his lawyer decided to pray for time and accordingly on the following day the pleader preferred a petition praying for a fresh date, on the plea that his client would need time to produce necessary documents which were lying in his village home. His prayer was rejected by the Judge on the ground that the case was an old one and no further date could be allowed in this respect. Moreover, the Judge was very much adamant to hear the case on the date fixed but at length on humanitarian ground the Judge allowed him one days' time. The man finding no other alternative started weeping, as one days' time was quite insufficient to collect the documents from as far ^a place as Sandwip or Cox's Bazar or Maheshkhali.¹ In those days, the communication system was so undeveloped that he needed quite a longer time to go to his home, and to return with the documents. Even with the modern means of developed communications system, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to go and return from Sandwip or Cox's Bazar within 24 hours. So, the Judge's decision worried him all the more. The man, therefore, kept sitting in the verandah of the court and started weeping. Shāh Amānat, while returning after the office hour towards his Khanqāh, saw the man weeping bitterly. At this sight, Shāh -
- Amānat was moved and asked him (the man) the cause of his weeping.

1. Maheshkhali is an island west of Cox's Bazar.

The man narrated his sad story. Being acquainted with his pathetic condition, Shāh Amānat asked the man whether he earned the property in a legal (Halāl) way and the man replied in the affirmative. Moreover, the man repeatedly said that 'God forbid, if the case was lost he would be turned into street beggar as his entire property ~~is~~ was involved in that case. Then Shāh Amānat advised the man to see him at Sadar Ghāt after Maghrib prayer. The troubled man thought within himself that Shāh Amānat being an attendant of the Judge, might come to his rescue on certain plea before the Judge or would create some grounds for postponement of hearing of the case. As a drowning man catches the straw, the man relied on the peon. He went to Sadarghat at the fixed time and Shāh Amānat also came to Sadarghat in time. As soon as Shāh Amānat saw the man, he told him in private the following words "If I help you in the matter, you are cautioned not to disclose it to any one, if you do so, you will have to suffer". The man agreed to the proposal and took a vow not to disclose the matter to any one else. Shāh Amānat then asked the man to close his eyes and when he did so, Shāh Amānat spread up a handkerchief on the river. No sooner the handkerchief was spread up on the river, it turned into a boat. Then Shāh Amānat got the man into the boat and advised him not to open his eyes till the boat reached its destination and then he would get down from the boat and would proceed to his house and would take up all the concerned documents with him and again would get on the boat and shut down the eyes as before till it reached its destination. Indeed, what a

miracle it was ! A boat without a boatman and without any oars started moving on and after a while the man could feel that the boat had reached the desired place and as per order of Shāh Amānat the man got down from the boat and went directly to his residence; without any word, he came back with concerned documents of the case and got on the boat and again he shut his eyes as before; the boat went on smoothly and reached Sadar^{ghat} again. The man got down from the boat and met Shāh Amānat there. Shāh Amānat again warned the man as before not to disclose the matter to any-body and took up the handkerchief from the river and then proceeded to his destination. After his return from home the man handed over all the documents relating to the case to his lawyer. The lawyer was astonished at this, he asked the man as to how he could bring the documents from such a distance within a few hours. The man briefed him that the documents were in possession of his relation in the Chittagong town which he forgot completely and that made him to pray for postponement of the case. Hence the next day when the Judge took up the case for hearing, he (the Judge) looked upon the man with a frowning face and asked him how did he bring the documents within a day while a day before, he moved a petition for the postponement of the case. This added fuel to the fire against his case and moreover, the Judge had sufficient reason to believe that the man had tried actually to play a fowl game to apply a delatory tactic^s to prolong the case. Therefore, the Judge threatened him with an exemplary punishment. In this situation, the man however, in bold and sober attitude replied that he actually forgot that the documents were in fact in possession of

his relation in the town and that caused him to pray for postponement and so also his lawyer tried to postulate the fact before the Judge that the man was not a liar but true to his confession, but the Judge was bent upon his point and adamant to his former decision. Finding no way out the lawyer repeatedly asked the man to tell the truth. The man was in a horn of dilemma. If he disclosed the fact, he would suffer as cautioned by Shāh Amānat or if he did not he would have to suffer seven years imprisonment. The man became very much frightened and started weeping but of no avail. At last he narrated the fact; this incidence made all present at the court including the Judge astonished. Though the Judge was an English man and had little belief in mysticism, he became perplexed on this incredible happenings and came down from Ejlas (seat) and touched the feet of Shāh Amānat and begged appology of him as he (the Judge) very often misbehaved with Shāh Amānat on a number of occasions, while the latter discharged his duties as a low-paid employee of the court. The Judge requested Shāh Amānat not to attend the court anymore. The Judge further said that he would bear the entire expenditure of the saint. Probably the Judge was neither aware of the power of Sūfis and saints on worldly matters nor he was in the know of their abhorrence against worldly gains. He also could not comprehend that the saint kept himself engaged in an uncared for job just to conceal his golden treasure of spiritual attainments from the eyes of the public. While the court was in this situation, Shāh Amānat quietly slipped out and that was his last day

in the court. His secret being disclosed, he came back to his khānqāh. He devoted himself more to the spiritual exercises in his small Khānqāh towards the eastern side of Lal dighi, the place where he is lying buried.¹

The above miracle raised Shāh Amānat to a great height of honour and dignity and earned for him the reverence of the people irrespective of caste and creed.

(b). A few more examples of his miracles are given below which record his profundity in the arena of mysticism.² As discussed earlier, the Jāmi mosque of Chittagong, during the British occupancy, was turned into a magazine of arms and amunitions and so prayer was not offered there and hence the elite of the city including Shāh Amānat said their prayers at Qadam Mubarak mosque established by Nawab Yasin Khān. One day it so happened that a good number of people assembled in the mosque to say the Juma (congregational) prayer but Shāh Amānat was yet to reach. The Imām of the mosque was vexed by the people assembled, to lead the prayer but the Imām was waiting for Shāh Amānat. Again when the Musallis (offerers of prayer) raised uproar for offering prayer as the time was going to be over, then the Mua'dhin (caller of the prayer) started Adhān to deliver 'Khutba' (Sermon). Shāh Amānat also reached at there at that very moment. After the prayer was over, Shāh Amānat told the Imām that the prayer was held a bit earlier. One man amongst the gathering replied that the prayer was offered a bit later. Then Shāh Amānat asked the man to shut his eyes and so he did accordingly.

1. A.Karim : Hadrat Shāh Sūfī Amānat Khān, pp.29-36.

2. Ibid, pp.37-39.

Shah Amānat then wrapped the head of the man with a sheet of cloth and asked the man to open his eyes and the man was at his wit's end, the moment he opened his eyes, he saw before him the holy Kaba and the Mua'zzin was on the way of performing ablution (Wadu).¹ The man at once touched the feet of Shah Amānat and begged pardon for his impertinence. The man also placed himself at the service of Shah Amānat at a stretch for twelve years. Later this prolong bondage of divine spiritual attraction made him to own the exuberance of spiritual power through able care of Shah Amānat. The man was Sūfī Muḥammad Dāyem, who established the Khānqāh at 'Azimpur, Dhaka. That Sūfī Muḥammad Dāyem was a disciple of Shah Amānat is also stated by Ḥamid Allāh Khān in his Aḥādīth al-Khawānīn.²

His Khānqāh at 'Azimpur in Dhaka attained great prominence in the history of Sūfī-ism in Bengal. Sūfī Muḥammad Dāyem is lying buried there. The shrine still receives a great popularity to the people of Bangladesh.

(c). Another miracle of Shah Amānat is also told and retold by the people of Chittagong.³ A widow of Patiya, village Harin Khain, district Chittagong used to serve in the Khānqāh of Shah Amānat. She had a son named 'Abd al-Wahhab. The widow was in continuous anxiety about the future of the boy. Once she begged to Shah Amānat to get her son engaged in a service. Shah Amānat asked her son to keep himself engaged

1. This kind of Karāmat is heard about other sūfis also. In modern scientific days this, however, cannot be explained, because timing in Bengal and Arabia is not the same.

2. Quoted supra, p.101.

3. A.Karim : Hadrat Shah Sūfī Amānat Khān, pp.42-47.

in the Judge's Court. Though the boy knew a little reading and writing he was not fit to be of any service in the court, and so he did not pay any heed to the admonition of the Shāh. But the widow was very much concerned of her son and took a vow to provide him with a job. She requested the Shāh a second time about her son. This enraged Shāh Amānat who wanted to know whether she acted upon his advice. On and from that day the boy attended the court regularly without any work. Once in an opportune moment, while the boy was engaged in writing something, and the Judge was passing by him, his benign look was cast upon the boy. The Judge appreciated the handwriting of the boy. Sitting on his Ejlas (seat in the court) the Judge at once called the boy and asked him whether he was prepared to act as a pleader in his court and the boy agreed to the proposal with a timid voice. The Judge then conferred upon him the Sanad (certificate) of pleadership and from that day the boy started practising in the court. Within a short time, he earned a remarkable progress in his profession and enjoyed unexpected affection and sympathy from the clients and that gave him an opportunity to a mass wealth. He erected a mosque at his village home (Harin Khain) which is still found in a dilapidated condition. The mosque bears a stone inscription dated in A.H.1222/A.D.1807. The inscription reads as follows:-

”پروان شاہ اکبر جوئی چون کعبہ شریف بنایا مسوری
بران اسم بان و تاریخ آن ز عبد الوہاب ابن خٹا مسوری“

Trans: "During the time of Akbar-i-M'anawi¹ Let a mosque be built like K'aba, take the name and date of building the mosque from

1. Shāh Akbar mentioned here is the Mughal emperor Akbar II. H.Nelson Wright, Coins of the Mughal emperors of India, Muhammad Akbar-II 1221-1253 A.H./A.D.1806-1837, pp.302-04, Deep publication, Delhi, 1975. Plate, V, (a). Though the Mughal emperors were then pensioners of of the East India Company, it seems that the Muslims remembered their names as de jure sovereigns.

failed. He cried out saying, everything had gone to the dogs, all arrangement have been useless. On the other hand, all on a sudden fire broke out at his residence and all his belongings were burnt to ashes. On the following day he went to Shāh Amānat to inform him of his misfortune and at this Shāh Amānat reminded him that he cautioned him before that he would not be able to treat all invitees equally.¹

A most vital issue has to be dealt with elaborately here and that is on the point of the family and descendants of Shāh Amānat. The present Khādims of the dargāh of Shāh Amānat claim themselves to be descendants of the Shāh, Their claim is based on an Waqfnāmah as discussed below:-

In A.D.1841 a waqf nama was executed by Anwar Khan who claimed himself to be the son of Shah Amanat, which in short runs thus:-²

"I, Anwar Khan son of late Shah Amanat Shahib (Kuddusa Sirrahu) (may Allah bless his grave) inhabitant of Andar Killa, attached to Kotwali P.S. in the district of Chittagong do hereby declare and affirm of my own accord in sound health and in full possession of sense and without being forced by others in the presence of renowned and famous Muslims. Whereas I found that the Dargahs of Pirs and darvishes, Wali Allahs (saints) are not managed and administered

1. Abdul Karim: Hadrat Shāh Sūfi Amānat Khān, pp.42-47.

2. D.L.R.16, Dhaka, 1964, civil appellate Jurisdiction, Fauzul Ali Khan, Appellant Vs. Commissioner of Waqfs, East Bengal, and now in his place Administrator of Waqfs, East Bengal, and now in his place Administrator of Waqfs for the Province of East Pakistan and others Respondents.

properly for want of money and whereas I apprehend that it is impossible to the sacred dargah of the aforesaid Hadrat Shah Saheb situated at Anderkilla, in the district of Chittagong such as religious service, Jiarat, reading of Fateha, distribution of bread and sweet, daily lighting and sweeping and annual Orash etc., will be performed in future. So, I do hereby promise and agree to dedicate in the name of Allah for the benefit of the said Shah Saheb's dargah the entire 5 Kanis, 8 gandas of land out of my own maliki khas possessed land, the value of which is Rs.200/- according to the Company comprising nal, vita, home stead and pond as described in the schedule below as Waqf and I do hereby appoint my two grand sons Aliar Khan and Amanat Khan as Mutawallis for proper management of the dargah of the said Shah Saheb. They are the sons of my deceased son Alip Khan, who died in my presence.

Full right to the waqf property has been given to the two Mutawallis for the afore-said purposes. After the death of these two Mutawallis their sons will succeed as Mutwallis from generation to generation. I, the wakif do declare that I did neither transfer the aforesaid property by way of sale, gift, heba exchange, etc. nor I have given the same in permanent and the said two Mutawallis also shall in no way be allowed to transfer the aforesaid lands by way of sale, gift, permanent settlement etc. Whatever surplus will remain after defraying all these expenses, I, the waKif shall appropriate for my own maintenance and other necessities. If the Mutawallis act contrary to the canons of Islam, they shall be deprived of all right to the land of the said

Shah Sahab and to the management thereto and some other persons will be appointed in their place. On the basis of the aforesaid words, these words are written by way of waqfnama, dated the 11th Baisakh 1202 M.E."

Long after the Waqfnama, it appears from the record that the Waqf Commissioner passed an order¹ dated 21.3.1949 by which he declared the waqf to be a public waqf and appointed a Committee of management. By the same order, the waqf Commissioner framed a scheme for appropriation of the income of the properties. Being aggrieved by the said order, the Plaintiff² instituted other suit No.25 of 1953 in the Court of the First Sub-Judge, Chittagong, which on transfer to the court of the second sub-Judge, Chittagong was numbered as other suit No.21 of 1955. The suit was instituted on 30.11.1953.

The learned sub-ordinate Judge who tried the suit has answered all the issues in favour of the plaintiff except the entitlement to get possession and management of the dargah and the waqf properties unless the waqf created by Anwar Khan is found to be a waqf al-al-Aulad. With regard to the character of the waqf and its scheme of management, he has held that the waqf in question is a public waqf and not a waqf al-al-Aulad, that the Waqf Commissioner's order dated 11.12.52 by which he declared the waqf to be a public waqf, appointed a Committee of management and framed a scheme is valid and operative. As regards offering, his finding is that

1. D.L.R.16, Dhaka, p.8.

2. Fowzul Ali Khan, appellant, who claimed to be a descendant of Anwar Khan and of Shah Amānat.

offerings made to the dargah are consecrated to Allah or entrusted with a trust and are to be used for religious or pious purposes and as such the plaintiff is not entitled to lay any claim on such offerings. Then the plaintiff Fauzul Ali Khan preferred an appeal to the High Court, Dhaka reiterating his contentions that the waqf in question is a waqf al-al-Aulad or a private waqf and not a public waqf as held by the Waqf Commissioner and the trial court; that the Waqf Commissioner's order appointing a Committee of management and framing a scheme for appropriation of the income of waqf properties is illegal, inoperative and not binding on the hereditary Mutawallis.

Then the High Court bench consisting of the Chief Justice Chowdhury and Justice M.R.Khan delivered the Judgement¹ in favour of the appellant, Fauzul Ali Khan which is as follows:-

"I had the occasion to go through the Judgement proposed to be delivered by my learned brother in this appeal. My learned brother dealt with the case with minute details of facts and circumstances and the waqfnama in this appeal. I need not repeat them. I agree with my learned brother that the waqf is a genuine waqf and the plaintiff and the proforma defendant nos.15-17 are the defendants of the saint Shah Sufi Amanat and they are the hereditary Mutawallis under the waqfnama and that the waqf is ~~a~~ not waqf al-al-Aulad, but it does not necessarily follow that it is a public waqf as the learned subordinate Judge, the defence lawyers and the waqf Commissioner seem to think which has since been rightly appreciated held by Mr.Israil, the learned Advocate on behalf of the waqf²-Commissioner, who advanced an argument that is a

1. D.L.R.16, Fauzul Ali Khan Vs.Commissioner of Waqf, pp.3-4.

waqf other than waqf al-al-Aulad. Waqf al-al-Aulad is no doubt a private waqf, but all private waqfs are not waqf al-al-Aulad and it is correctly held by my learned brother that it is a private waqf created for the benefit of the grave of waqif's ancestor late Shah Sufi Amanat which in course of time, natured into a shrine. I am also in full agreement with my learned brother that the offerings in the grave of the saint or in the dargah are not waqf properties. They are neither income from the waqf properties or of the shrine nor dedicated by any body for any specific purposes, and the heirs of the waqif who are also Mutawallis of the waqf created for the benefit of the grave of the saint, are entitled to collect the same and use it for the purpose of the dargah as well as for their private needs, and needs of the descendants of the saint and the waqf Commissioner has got no right to make it a subject matter of the scheme framed by him about waqf property is contrary to the provision of the waqf nama and is therefore, illegal, and void. There is no defect of the frame of the suit in the facts and circumstances of the case. The money on account of the offerings that are lying in deposit in the bank and kept in deposit in pursuance of the order of the court are payable to the hereditary Mutawallis.

In the circumstances, I agree with my learned brother that this appeal should be allowed with costs throughout in terms of the order proposed by him."

Let us now discuss the issues,
(a). Anwar Khan claimed himself to be the son of Shah Amanat Allah Khan through a waqf nama, which has been discussed above. In the

1841,
year 1257, he has endowed in the waqf nama five kanis eight gandas of land including nal, Bhita and the pond etc.

(b). The learned Judges of the High Court mainly dealt with the nature of waqf nama and did not give much importance on the point of descendants.¹ From where and how the saint engaged himself in marriage and what was the name of his wife and ² where the grave of his wife is situated. No answer to these questions are found in any authoritative book either in India or in Bangladesh, or to those who claim to be descendants and who are living now. Even in the judgement of the High Court the answer to these questions are not found. It has been said earlier that Shāh Amānat engaged himself in an ordinary service either as a peon or as a Pankha puller. Therefore, it seems that it is not at all possible for a man whose monthly income was not more than 2/3 (two to three rupees) per month to own a vast property with such a meagre income, and more over, his service life was not more than two to three years. Hence it goes beyond our conjecture that within a short period how could he be the owner of such a vast property.

Moreover, a Walī or a Qutb always abhorred wealth and property and never left anything for their heirs in this world which is considered a vital point in the field of mysticism and they were always delved in the mysteries of Almighty Allah and always they kept themselves aloof from the worldly life. There is no doubt that Shāh Amānat was a

1. i.e. whether the plaintiffs were or are actually the lineal descendants of Shāh Amānat. Some questions come to our mind on this issue,

2. ^{personally asked} Those who claimed to be the descendants of Shāh Amānat, to furnish the name of the wife of Shāh Amānat but they failed to furnish the same.

Wali who at the instance of his pīr (teacher) arrived in Chittagong to take up the spiritual power (Wilāyat) of Chittagong. We have carefully studied the life of the saint and also personally visited the places¹ in India where the saint's family settled permanently and contacted the local people but now here the proof of his marriage was established.

Therefore, in the light of the above discussion we may come to the conclusion that since Anwar Khān the endower of the property claims himself to be the son of Shāh Amānat, information collected by us may not be correct. It seems, therefore, that Shāh Amānat left a family and the present mutawallies may have belonged to his family.

(2) Shafi Shāh

We are fortunate to have contemporary accounts of nineteenth century majdhūb Sūfis of Chittagong -- they are Shāfi Shāh and Badna Shāh. Hamīd Allāh Khān has written about both of them and his accounts are quoted below:-

I. Shafi Shah² In Islamabad there lived a man named Muhammad Shāfi Shāh. Due to extremity of his Jadhb (جذب) he was found

1. Visited the places personally, patna, Bihār, Phulwari Sharīf and Deoband.

2. Hamīd Allāh Khān : Tarikh-i-Hamīdī, PP, 218-220.

« دایم حسین است که توفیق شاه نامی از جانشان بیان شهر اسلام آباد بغایت مجتهدی که کارهای غیر متعارف می کرد و حسن و خیار هم آورده آتش می افروخت و جیره های ناکاره در آن می انداخت و می سوخت و بگ می کشید و بیشتر در مقام و گورستان دوستان های می گردید - روزی دیدم که آتش افروخته بود و سوزنی را در آن می تافت و هم چنان گرم و تافته بربلب و زبان خود می کشید و ذائقه داغ می چشید و زغال سوخته و جیره افروخته بر غلاف کفش و دول خویش می گذاشت و بر نمی داشت و آن دول نمی سوخت - و هفت استادان او را بعد از آنکه او را دیده بود با میزدند که او دعا کند و آن حضرت را فرزند متولد شد که تنها دار و دوی آن بسیار داشت - اما هیچ یک از آن با در تلفت

doing work at sixes and sevens. He used to set fire to the hays and thorns gathered by himself and also was in the habit of throwing useless things on the burning fire and used to shout on this scene. Very often he used to roam about in the graveyards and barren lands. Once I saw the man with a needle in his hand, he was giving heat on it after burning fire and he touched that heated needle with his lips and tongue and had its taste from the burnt strain. But it was never burnt nor strain was found by burning fire. He used to carry with him burning coal and put it in his worn out cloak or the belt. Once my teacher brought him in his Madrasah with the hope of getting his blessings for having a son. On his arrival at this madrasah, my teacher did not tell him about his cherished desire. At mid-night, while all were asleep, my teacher in his habitual custom, took for him 'Chilamchi'

روقت نیم شب که همه بخواب رفته بودند و حضرت استاذنا بر سر بخواب خود
بیدار بود و بجا رفت خود برای دفع خیر و قلیان می کشید آن مجذوب می گفت
که بزرگی که نام بر سر نوشته بودند از درخت ساقط شده است - روز
احقر که نوجوان بودم از پس پشت او سر در در خواندم که شنیده بودم که
خواندن درود او را بسیار بسوی خواننده متوجه می گرداند و روی خود بسوی من
گردانید و چندید باز بطرفی دیگر رفته و در در خواندم تا باز بسوی من نظر کرد
و متبسم شد - بار سوم از سوی دیگر چنان کردم - بسوی من نظر کرد و نگاه نیز
ساخت و بر آشفست اما بطرفی گفت که ای کودک با من خنده میکنی و در
بمحور او بدل مطلبی داشتم بلا گفتن من او مرا حجت باز نمود و گفت که چرا چنین
میکنی تا چنان می شود - و اکثر بخانه دانش پندت می بود و دانش پندت مرد
بود شاعر کامل بنامه دیدار بر سر سوزگار سنت درست از بدعت بیزار و بار
صف نخواندن - فارسی و عربی از محبت و رغبت علم و تحقیق مساعی بهتر از اکثر
علماء زمان بود - و مقاصد دینی خوب میدانست و در دفع منکرات میکرد تا می توانست
چنانکه کتب اشعار منظومه او بر زبان منظم می نمودند - از تنبیه الغافلین و پراگنده المومنین

(pet for spitting) for throwing cough; he heard that the 'Majdhub' went on saying that the leaf whereupon the name of the son was written, fell down from the tree.

Once during my youth I read out Darud (> > >)


behind him silently, because I had heard it before that the recitation of Darud Sharif attracts the mind of the real 'Wali' towards the reciter. He turned out his face to me and went on smiling. Again I started reciting Darud Sharif on the other side. He looked at me and smiled. A third time also I did the same, this time he looked at me in a frowning mood and became vexed but very affectionately told me, 'O, my boy you are cutting joke with me'. On another day I thought something in my mind but I did not express it, but he exposed the same and said, 'why are you doing so to become so'.

و عقائد نام و جز آن خصوصاً در پرتو المومنین بر طریق سلسله الذهب برای جایی
چهار از حکم و مراقب و تجربات خود گفته است - قابل دیدن و شنیدن است و قبل از توبه
کتاب طلایه طویل در ضمانت شریعت بنقل از ترجمه بهار دانش و بی نظیر و اشال آن
و از خود هم بسیار گفته بود از آن مهارت و فصاحت او در شعر بنقل ظاهر میشود
و اصحاب شرک و بدعت و هوا از در چنان ترسیدند که خوف از شوک از شرک
"بزرگتر شد" دانش موصوف بسیار از خواص و کرامات حمزه شفیع شاه
نقل میکرد - و با او بغایت اعتقاد داشت و می گفت که من روزی گفتم که بابا
شرک نماز بلوغم سخت بر آشفته را گفت زلفار خود را از سوزی - گفتم که چرا خود
نمی ترسی - گفت از یلیدی و عدم تقاضا خود بیایی بودن نمی توانم و نیز
دانش موصوف از در حکایت می کرد که روزی حمزه شفیع شاه بر هلیز دانش
نشسته بود و مردمان پیش او بودند که ناله و سوسوی که حالت خانه حجاب داشت
نظاره کرد - و دست خود را حرکت میداد پس گفت که بابا اندک باش و بگردان
حافظ اشارت کرد که نظر کنید که روی حالت آنسوی خانه که درختی عظیم کوهال بود
میسوز گفت اری گفت آنرا سوزی دیگر برابند تا از رندند را و دست خود را در آن

Mostly he used to reside in the house of Danish Pandit. He (Danish Pandit) was very much pious and a follower of the Sunnah of the Prophet and was deadly against Bid'at (بدعت). Though he had no knowledge of Arabic and Persian, he knew the Mas'ail (مسائل) (legal laws) much better than the 'Ulama. He was very much at home in religious affairs and prevented the people from doing wrong as far as possible. As for instance, his poetic version proves its authenticity. Of his published books are (1). تنبيه الخلق (2). عقائد نامه (3). برای المؤمنین. Specially in سوانح المؤمنین he expressed profound commendation in respect of order admittance and his experiences following Maulvi Jami's Silsilat-as Zahab which are worth listening. He also wrote books قبل از توبه (Qabl al-Tawbah) طوایر طویلہ (Tawamir-i-Tawilah) on rhetorical art for writing poetry in Bengali like his تراجم پیر دانش and نظائر etc. On these books his efficiency and lucidity in Bengali poetry was

همنان داشته بود کشید و درخت منور بیفتاد از بار آبر و نیز داشت
مرحوم ملکوت کرده گردان روز علمه حاکم ادرار بدیرانی محبوس کردند و
دست پایش را بستند - و آخر در آن وفات یافت سحر طایبان با هرستونی
که در خانه بود معاف کرد که گویا معاف و رحمت بود - و چون طفلان
میر خوار و لنگان چون کسی که پایش را بسته باشند خود را بر سیرین خود
گوشان گوشان از خانه بیرون آورده زیر دروازه زمانی دراز بستی
شمال قبله و در آن کشید و برخاست و رفت تا محبوس و بسته شد
پس وفات خود خود در آن کشید و این معنی دلالت بر الهام و کرامت دارد
میکنند

exhibited. The deer of Shirk and Bid'at was so much afraid of him as the swine was afraid of the tiger.

Danish Pandit used to narrate various miracles of Muhammad Shafi Shah and he had profound respect for him. One day Danish Pandit told Muhammad Shafi Shah that he would never offer his prayer on which he (Shafi Shah) became very much annoyed and asked him (Danish Pandit) not to burn himself in fire. Then he asked him (Shafi Shah) that why did he not pray? He told that owing to his impurity he was always afraid of his purity. Danish Pandit further narrates, once Muhammad Shafi Shah was sitting on the () drawing room and all the people were before him, suddenly he (Muhammad Shafi Shah) looked at the bamboo made curtain adjacent to the house and stretched his hands and told in his mother tongue (Bengali) 'Move yourself', and again said 'a little' and indicated the people present to look that behind the house there is a jack fruit tree and 'do you see that a cow is grazing'. The people said 'Yes' then he said to get it (cow) out. After that the hands he stretched out so long, he unstretched it and then the tree fell down with its root. Danish Pandit further says that the Government officials arrested him binding both his hands, legs in such condition that he faced death. And at the later part of the night, he embraced with each pillar of the house as if it seemed that it was a departing embracement. And the house where he was arrested in chains, he went out

of the house beneath the door and looked out placing his head out side and stood up and died on binding position, which shows a man a sign of death. As the weaning children tightened their legs, like wise he (Shafī Shāh) also went out of the house dragging, in this way he was for long time lying himself beneath the door northward facing the Qiblah, he stood up and went away, till then he was in binding position. After his death, he stretched out himself. All these throw light upon his intuition and miracles".

(3.) Badna Shāh

Hamīd Allāh Khān writes about Badna Shāh as follows:¹
A majdhūb, named Badna Shāh, was witnessed now and then, a few days ago, who used to pass his times very often in jungles and hilly areas. Occasionally he would come to the city, if any body offered him any thing to eat, he either used to take or refused. Sometimes he was found asking for food, he never touched either gold or coin from any one and had no connection with those things. If any body used to offer him those things forcibly out of affection and reverence, he used to offer those things to others.

1. Hamid Allah Khan : Ahadith al-Khawanin, pp.230-231.

بدنہ شاہ نامی را کہ بصورت مجاہد بود قبل ازین بحمد روز گاہ گاہ میبرد
کہ اکثر محروم و گریستن بسری برد و گاہی بشویم می آمد اگر کسی
چیزی از خوردنی طلبید می و طبع از زر و فلوس نفرتی اما بدین دای
و پیوسته مطهره با خود می داشت تا بدن و خود کردی و نماز گزاردی
و گفتا او را بدنہ شاہ می گفتند و بدنہ بزبان ایندیہا مطهره را گویند
و کسی از روی اعتقاد و ترحم بدنہ برنجی یا سی او را دادی و کسی دیگر بقصد
قلب خود را روی عرض و از آن مطهره قلندر از گرفتاری و مطهره سفالین بدین
دادی چیزی نگفتی و عمامہ دریدہ و کپتہ بدین بر سر بست اگر کسی عمامہ نو
و بهتر دادی آن را بدین دای و در نماز مسجدہ ہائے ملکز یاہ از قدر مقرر کرد
و سخن کمتر کردی و مثل مجاہد و دیگر کمتر چیزی گفتی -

He always kept with him a water-pot for ablution and performed prayer and this is why the people entitled him Badna Shah Mian. In Chittagonian language the ^{مطهره} is called Badna (water-pot) and some one offered him out of reverence the water-pot made of bronze or copper. It was observed that some one out of greed used to take it (bronze or copper) in exchange of clay-made Badna (water-pot) but he never uttered anything and always used to wear patched cloth and old turban. If any one offered him a new one (turban) he offered it to others. He was in the habit of offering repeated sijdahs more than the fixed ones and talked less like other majdhubs. He had no relation with others, either good or bad. Some one used to feed him at his own residence. Allah knows best actually what he was.

و علاقه از خیر و شر یا احقری نداشت و کسی از بخانه خود بردی و چیزی
خود را نری خداوند علیم را دانند که حالش چه بود و از چیزی او را نمی بینم و از
کسی نمی شنم که او را دیده است خدای دانا دانند که چه شد - بعد از مدت باز
ظهور کرد و بتدریج از پیری و کمزوری و رنجوری در او اثر کرده و اکثر
در مساجد قریب کوستان و گاه در کوه هم بسری بود - و عجزی
برادر بود که در جوار محله است برای پدرش خرد از داره مردم
خدمتش میکرد تا در اوایل ۱۲۸۵ هجری در اوایل ۱۲۸۳ هجری
آن آزاده منش از بند محنت دنیای دون آزادی مطلق یافت
و براه عاقبت شتافت و جمعی از افاضل و طلباء و اعیان در
جنازه اش حاضر بودند رحمه الله تعالی و الله تعالی اعلم

For sometimes he is not seen by anyone. Allah knows what happens. After passing a long time, he appears again and owing to his old age, he fell victim of weakness and anxiety. Most of the time he passed in hill-side mosque and hills. One of our neighbouring old lady of Muradpur engaged herself at his service for her own livelihood. At last in the beginning of A.H.1284/A.D.1867 or in the later part of A.H.1283/A.D.1866, this great personality of non-allured nature freed himself from the worries and anxieties of the world and left himself for good for the next world.¹ Quite a good number of Ulama, intellectuals and students attended his funeral ceremony, may Allah bless him and rest him in peace."

From the narratives of Hamid Allah Khan it seems that the author was a contemporary of Badna Shah and he had seen him. The date of death (1866-67) of Badna Shah as given by the author also shows that the author had seen him because the writing of his book was completed in 1871, only five years after the death of Badna Shah. But the case of Shafi Shah was otherwise, he was an earlier person. Hamid Allah Khan's narratives show that he saw Shafi Shah in his early days when he was a student. Hamid Allah Khan also says that Shafi Shah was a contemporary of Danish Pandit who was a scholarly person and wrote several books.

1. The mazar of the saint is at the western side of the Chittagong Medical College. The mazar is roofed by C.I. Sheet. The area where the saint is lying buried is known as Mehdiabag. For his mazar see plate-V (b).

Danish Pandit has also been mentioned by poet Muhammad Muqim. Danish Pandit (also known as Danish Qadi) was a friend of the poet. Muhammad Muqim used to visit the Pandit in his house at Suluk Bahr, and used to discuss with him various problems,² probably relating to literary matters. Although contemporary, the poet refers to Danish Pandit in polite and respectful words, thus showing that Danish Pandit was senior to him in age.³ Hamid Allah Khan's testimony shows that Danish Pandit was also an author of several books. So, he seems to have been senior to the poet Muhammad Muqim in learning also. If Muhammad Muqim lived at least upto 1827 A.D. his senior contemporary Danish Pandit lived towards the beginning of the 19th century. Shafi Shah who was also a contemporary of Danish Pandit also must have been living towards the beginning of the 19th century. Shafi Shah must have pre-deceased Danish Pandit, because Hamid Allah Khan has narrated Danish Pandit's reminiscences of Shafi Shah. It will not, therefore, be unreasonable to suggest that Shafi Shah died (or was put to death by the English Government) during the first few years of the 19th century.

Mahbub al-Alam says, after the death of Shafi Shah alias Badna Shah in the prison of the English Government, the Wilayat (spiritual leadership) of Chittagong fell vacant and Shah Amanat, who was in Bihar, came to Chittagong and occupied the seat.⁴ The learned

1. Muhammad Enamul Huq thought that the poet wrote his book in 1773 A.D. and so he was of the opinion that the poet and Danish Pandit were living in the 18th century (Muhammad Enamul Huq: Muslim Bangla Sahitya, p.287) but recently Abdul Karim has shown that Muhammad Muqim wrote his book in 1827 A.D. (Bangla Academy Patrika), Baisakh--Ashad 1390, B.S., pp.85-87.

2. See note-I, p.104.

3. Bangla Academy Patrika, Baisakh-----Ashad, 1390 B.S., pp.108,115.

4. Mahbub Al-Alam: Chattagramer Itihās (Hadrat Shah Sufi Amanat Khan), pp.1-2.

- (b) The Abid or worshipper: This is the function to be performed in regular worship, fast, prayer, piety and asceticism. This sort of function is sometimes known as the function of Akhyar or goodness.
- (c) The Zahid or ascetic: This is the continuation of the previous function in its perfect stage and a preliminary stage of the next function. In this stage the Zahid becomes totally engrossed in meditation and takes no notice of worldly attachments. He keeps himself in perfect seclusion to understand deeply the mysteries of Allah and shuns away the accompaniment of the people and prays always for the betterment of the humanity.
- (d) The 'Abdal':- The function of the Abdal is to realise the mysteries of Allah and in doing so, he realises Him in the heart of the hearts. He is also called a 'substitute' as he substitutes divine nature.
- (e) The 'Wali' or saint: In this stage i.e. after the enhancement of position to the rank of Wali, he does not remain satisfied merely on the realisation of Allah. He considers himself the friend of Allah and asks grants from Him in the form of miracles. Allah grants miracles of minor type to the wali, who on this strength guides the people to the right path.
- (f) The Qutb or axis: This is the highest Mark in the darwish hierarchy. The most eminent and august Sufi of the age is
-

generally called 'Qutb'. He is crowned with super natural powers generally called 'Karamat' or miracles. He presides over a periodical parliament of his hierarchy members, which are not hampered by the limitation of time and space. The 'Qutb' is so powerful that he can annihilate time and space for his members as has been vested in him by the Almighty Allah.¹

The miracles of Sūfīs and darwishes are too numerous to enumerate them. It includes for instance, walking on water, flying in the air, rain-making, appearing in various places at the same time, knowledge and prediction of future events, thought reading, to recover from incurable diseases are some of the most significant miracles of the darwishes and Sūfīs of the country.

The darwish hierarchy, just discussed, therefore, shows that the Wilayat of Chittagong or for that matter, any other place, was never vacant and when the holder died, his vacant seat was occupied by another. But it is not possible to determine who succeeded whom; whether Shah Amanat succeeded Shafi Shah or vice-versa. Even if we believe that the succession was confined to these two; i.e. one succeeded the other, it seems more probable that Shah Amanat was senior to Shafi Shah and the latter succeeded the former.²

1. Muhammad Enamul Haq : A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, pp.109-110.

2. Hamid Allah's discussion about both of them shows that the author did not see Shah Amanat so that he has not much to say about him; but in the case of Shafi Shah, the historian saw him as a boy and in his boyish exhuberance he tried to test the saint.

(4) Sufi Nur Muhammad (B.A.)

Sufi Nur Muhammad is one of the great Sufis of the 19th century. His fame spread far and wide, as he was, as will be seen presently, a disciple of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid Brelvi and associated himself with the Sayyid's Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement. He also joined the Jihad initiated by his teacher Sayyid Ahmad Shahid.

Sufi Nur Muhammad belonged to a family of Ghazni which migrated to India long before but the Sufi ultimately settled in Chittagong. He is now lying buried in village Maliash (called at present Mithanala) in Mirsarai Upazila of Chittagong.

Description of his Mazar:- His shrine is situated five and a half mile away from the Mirsarai Railway station, and on the Dhaka Chittagong Trunk Road. In the western side of the road the village Maliash is situated and adjacent to the village another village named Mithanala is located and in between two villages, at the south-eastern side of a mosque the mazar of Sufi Nur Muhammad is situated. Formerly, the mosque and the shrine of the Sufi was under Maliash area. Recently, on the basis of the renewed survey, the village Maliash has been annexed to the Mithanala area. On the north eastern side of the mazar a big pond is situated and two furlongs ahead of the mosque a senior Madrasah is named after him ---- Sufi-Nuria Madrasah.¹ One of his fore-fathers migrated from Ghazna to Delhi. The tradition regarding his family ancestry is as follows:-²

There was a prince in Ghazna named Bakhtyar, he was also called Qutb Alam. He lost his parents in early life but inherited a huge estate.

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1. Muhammad Murti al-Rahman, A-i-nai-Waisi, pub, Patna, in A.D. 1976, p. 119.
 2. Challish Auliyar Kahini, pp. 519-20.

Before death his father by a Wasiyatnāmah appointed his uncle a guardian of the estates untill Bakhtyār attained the age of maturity. But when Bakhtyār came of age and asked his uncle to give him the charge of his property, the uncle not only refused to do so, but began to behave with Bakhtyār in a very insolent manner. The young Bakhtyār thought it wise to leave Ghazni to free himself from the evil designs of his uncle. As he was already married, he was accompanied by his wife, his son Fīrūz Shāh and his sister Maimuna and all of them reached Dehli. The reigning king of Dehli received them well. Bakhtyār was honest and intelligent; the king appreciated his virtues and gave him the charge of administration of 'Ghar'. Bakhtyār administered his Principality well, but due to some political reasons, the people revolted against the king. Bakhtyār felt that he should not involve himself in these troubles; he did not think it proper either to stay in Dehli or to go to his native land. He proceeded towards Bengal and finally settled at Dandira¹, a pargana in the Feni district (Noakhali). He was accompanied by his wife, son Fīrūz Shāh, sister Maimuna and a few other friends and relations. At Dandira, Maimuna was married to one Shujāt 'Alī, said to be a relative of Bakhtyār. Maimuna gave birth

1. The name of Dandira Pargana is found in the Mughal revenue records. (Ain-i-Akbari, vol.II, Jerrett and J.N.Sarkar, p.151; Even in the Fiscal divisions of the Feni sub-division of the then Noakhali district, Dandira was an important Pargana comprising of 25,250 acres or 39.45 sq. miles; 19 estates, yielding a revenue of £ 2,083.8 shilling (i.e Rs.16,668). Census Returns of 1872 as quoted in W.W. Hunder : Statistical Account of Bengal, vol.VI, p.343.

to Muhammad Pasha,¹ who was the father of Sufi Nur Muhammad.²

Muhammad Pasha (or Fana) was a vastly learned man and was a great Sufi of his time. Sufi Nur Muhammad received his primary education under the care of his father. Then he proceeded to Calcutta and admitted himself into the Aliyah Madrasah better known as Calcutta Madrasah established by Warren Hasting in 1781 A.D.³ He received his higher studies in Islamic learning there and attained great proficiency in Hadith, Tafsir, Fiqh, Usul and Philosophy. His scholarly attainments were rewarded by the Calcutta Madrasah authorities by appointing him a teacher in that institution. After sometime he returned to his homeland Neakhali and became a disciple of Shaikh Zahed, one of the renowned Sufis of his time. While he was thus deeply engaged in both esoteric and exoteric sciences, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid Brelvi, the famous leader and teacher of the Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement came to Calcutta ostensibly to preach his mission, but secretly to gather disciples to join him in his contemplated Jihad movement. During this time Sufi Nur Muhammad went to Calcutta, accepted discipleship of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid and joined his Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement. Not only Sufi Nur Muhammad but his brother⁴ Haji Chand also joined the holy war waged by Sayyid

1. In another account the name of the father of Sufi Nur Muhammad was Muhammad Fana (Aina-i-Waisi, p.119). Either the name has been confused by either of these authors, or it may be that as Sufi Nur Muhammad's father was also an ascetic person, he got the nick name Fana.
2. It was not possible to verify the tradition with other sources, because no such source is available. It is also not possible to know the name of the king of Delhi who gave an assignment to Bakhtyar. But from the timing, it seems that Bakhtyar came to Delhi during the middle or later part of the 18th century when the Mughal empire was fast deteriorating.
3. Percival Spear: The Oxford History of Modern India, Oxford, 1965, p.205.
4. It is said that one night Sufi Nur Muhammad saw the holy Prophet in a dream who directed him to go to Calcutta and to join Sayyid Ahmad Shahid (Hayat-i-Waisi, p.9).

Ahmad Shahid. They actually took part in the Jihad and Sufi Nur Muhammad was wounded in battle.¹ After the martyrdom of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid at Balaket, Sufi Nur Muhammad returned to Bengal and settled permanently at Maliash (modern Mithanala) in the Mizampur Pargana of Chittagong. Here he started a new life, a life devoted to preaching of the Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement.

It is deemed necessary here to discuss in brief the nineteenth century Islamic movements in Bengal. It is also necessary to discuss in brief the 19th century religious movements that may claim similarity with Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah of Delhi, viz. Wahabi movement of Arabia and Faraidi movement of Haji Shariat Allah in Bengal. In fact these three religious movements paved the way of Islamic revivalism of the nineteenth century and because of certain cardinal principles, scholars often make confusion between Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah with the other two movements. Like wise the term Indian Wahabism, is applied by the European scholars to the Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement. Hence a brief and a careful study is necessary.

(1). Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah: This religious reform movement was initiated from Delhi by Sayyid Ahmad Shahid from 1782 A.D. and at the same time Haji Shariat Allah also started his Faraidi movement in 1818 A.D. The term 'Indian Wahabism' applied to this movement by European scholars as found in Hunter's 'Our Indian Musalmans', Encyclopaedia of Islam and the other works is not borne out by the

1. M. Ridwan al-Haq, Sufi Nur Muhammad Sahib-er-Jibani, Chittagong 1968, pp.12-13.

contemporary and later sources.¹

Sayyid Ahmad Shahid says 'My Tariqah (i.e. path) is the tariqah of my grand father 'the Prophet himself. Accordingly 'I take a full meal of dry bread on one day and thank God; on the other day I keep hungry and bear it with patience'.²

(II). In 1829 A.D. a person named Abd Allah ibn Sayyid Bahadur 'Ali opposed the Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement and questioned the propriety of the practice of 'Sayyid Ahmad, who as stated by Mr. 'Ali, called his own Tariqah as Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah.³ This was refuted by Maulvi Irtida 'Ali, a disciple of the Sayyid, in which he emphasised that the term was used in general sense without any intention to exclude other tariqahs or paths of the Sufis (i.e. Muslim mystics) from being Muhammadi (i.e. the path of Muhammad).⁴

(III). In A.D. 1837 Maulana Karamat 'Ali says that some of the followers of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid who professed to follow the Qur'an and traditions of the Prophet by means of their own independent judgement (Ijtihad) called themselves Muhammadi (i.e. an abbreviation of Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah).⁵ It is further clear from the context that Maulvi Karamat

'Ali meant the main body of the followers of Sayyid Ahmad led by

1. Mu'in al-din Ahmad Khan: A History of the Fara'idi movement in Bengal, p. xxxvi, pub. 1965.

2. Ghulam Rasul Mehr: Jama'at-i-Mujahidin, Lahore, 1955, p. 69. (quoted from MS. Majma'ah Makatib-i-Shah Ismail, p. 282).

3. Abd Allah ibn Sayyid Bahadur 'Ali ed: Jawab-i-Istifta Mir Muhammad 'Ali Mataba-i-Ahmadi, A.H. 1245/A.D. 1829, p. 9. The question reads:

"مذہب تراجمی و طریقہ بجز از تحقیق مقدم آن و توفیق بجانب رسول خدا (صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم) فریب است یا نه؟ آری میر احمد صاحب طریقہ خود را طریقہ محمدی گویند."

4. Ibid., p. 9.

5. Cf. Maulvi Karamat 'Ali: Quwwat al-Iman, Calcutta, A.H. 1253/A.D. 1837, pp. 135 and 197.

Maulvi Wilayat 'Ali of Patna, who were opposed to his own group.¹ Being a close follower of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, Maulvi Karamat 'Ali however, claims himself to be a Muhammadi in a different sense. He made it clear that Sayyid Ahmad Shahid did not apply the term 'Muhammadi' to his reform movement but used it just as a collective name for the Qadiriyyah, Chishtiyah, Naqshbandia and Mujaddidiyah mystic orders as reformed and practised by him. He is of the opinion that Muhammadia did not represent a fifth mystic order but a higher level of mystic realisation in the orders mentioned above.²

(IV). According to the family records of Maulvi 'Inayat-'Ali (who from A.D.1831 was the Chief exponent of the Sayyid's doctrine in Bengal were known as Muhammadi).³

(V). The followers of one of its successor movement, Ahl-i-Hadith call themselves Muhammadi down to the present day; for, according to them, they do not follow any other tariqah but the path shown by the Prophet himself.

(VI). In the 'Great Wahabi case' of A.D.1870 in the Calcutta High Court, the accused persons who were the followers of the Sayyid's reform movement, protested against the term 'Wahabi' applied to them and submitted that they did not regard Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahab as their leader. They appealed to the Judge to refer to them as Sunni i.e. the follower of the tradition of the Prophet, as distinguished from

1. See infra., 'Split among the followers of 'Tariqah-i-Muhammadia'.'

2. Cf. Maulvi Karamat 'Ali; Quwwat al-Iman, op.cit.p.198.

3. Cf. Abd al-Rahman: Al Durar al-Manthar fi tarajim-i-Ahl-i-Sadiqpur, Ilahabad, A.H.1345, p.133.

bid'ati or the follower of Sinful innovations.¹

(VII). Bevan Jones says that the orthodox Maulvis opposed the drastic reforms of the followers of Sayyid's and 'nicknamed them Wahhabis'.²

(VIII). It will be found in the following pages that the reform movement of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid belonged to the tradition of Shah Wali Allah of Dehli and had no historical connection with the Wahabi movement of Arabia, and that the basis of their doctrines was laid on different assumptions.³

The above evidence goes against the term 'Wahabism', or 'Indian Wahabism', as applied to the followers of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid. The modern Muslim scholars of the Indian sub-continent protest against the application of the term to this movement.⁴ No generally acceptable name has, however, been suggested by the scholars so far.

Dr. Mahmud Hussain disapproves Hunter's theory that Sayyid Ahmad Shahid's movement was an off-shoot of the Wahabism of Arabia. He, however, refrains from suggesting an alternative nomenclature. On the other hand, he regards Muhammadiyah as a new mystic order or Tariqah, founded by Sayyid Ahmad.⁵

We have seen above that the exclusive application of the term 'Muhammadiyah' to mystic order is supported by Maulvi Karamat Ali through he contended that Sayyid Ahmad Shahid used it in a collective sense to

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1. Pamphlet on India : The Great Wahabi case being a full report of the Proceedings in the matters of Ameer Ali Khan and Hashmatad Khan, Calcutta, 1870, p.1.
 2. Bevan Jones: The People of the Mosque, London, 1932, p.206.
 3. See Infra.
 4. See Shaikh Muhammad Akram: Mawj-i-Kawthar, Lahore, Circa, 1948, p.28f: The History of the freedom movement, Karachi, 1957, p.554.
 5. Cf. History of the freedom movement, op.cit., pp.564 and 572.

mean the four well-known mystic orders. The use of the term in a mystic sense is also hinted in the item of evidence quoted above. The use of the term 'Tariqah' by Sayyid Ahmad himself, as quoted above in the first item of our list, and a close examination of the context, however, does not give any indication that he used it specifically for mystic order as different from the general programme of his reform. This interpretation of 'Tariqah' is further supported by the fact that in the Sirat al-Mustaqim (the most authentic work on the reform programme of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid) the Sayyid divides the Programme of his reform into two principal parts, which he calls rah or path (the Persian equivalent of the Arabic Tariqah)¹ i.e. Rah-i-Wilayat or the path of mysticism, and Rah-i-Nabuwat or the path of prophecy, one being complementary to the other.² In other words, in his Programme of reform, he attempted a synthesis of Shariah (the legal system) with Tariqah (mysticism); and as the only gate of entrance to his reform movement was through mystic initiation, i.e. bay'at-i-Tawbah, it is not possible to disjoint mysticism from the rest of the Programme of his reform. In the explanation of Bay'at-i-Tawbah (i.e. the well-known procedure of initiation into the mystic orders of the Sufis), the Sayyid says³, "First of all the seeker of this path (i.e. the path of prophecy) ought to attend to the prohibitions imposed by the Shariah relating to faith, action, morality, instinct, desire and prayer.

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1. Shah Ismail Shahid: Sirat al-Mustaqim (copy Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka), pp.1 ff.
 2. Ibid., p.144.
 3. Ibid., pp.1 ff.

He must seek and find out (the rules) from the Qur'an and the Traditions of the Prophet. If he possesses the knowledge of the Qur'an and the traditions, he must find them out himself from the opinions of the learned scholars of Islamic sciences."

Hence it is clear that mysticism of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid was nothing specifically separate from his programme of reviving prophetic tradition. Therefore, the reform movement of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid can be fairly distinguished as 'Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah', the term used by him and his followers.

Sufi Nur Muhammad and his associates in Bengal were deeply engaged themselves in propagating ^{and} the preaching this Tariqah i.e. Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah, in this part of Bengal. Maulana Welayat 'Ali and Inayat 'Ali spread the movement in Rajshahi and Maldah, Maulana Isam al-din of Sandwip in Chittagong and Neakhali and Maulana Abd Allah in Dhaka. Sufi Nur Muhammad after his return from Jihad to the village Maliash in Nizampur Pargana in Chittagong propagated the mystic mission of his teacher Sayyid Ahmad Shahid in Assam, Comilla and in Chittagong. As a devoted disciple of Sayyid Ahmad whose inner virtues, serene character, indomitable courage encouraged Sufi Nur Muhammad Nizampurī to propagate the 'Tariqah' of his teacher (i.e. Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah) till his death on November 1st, 1858 A.D. on Monday, the 24th of Rabi' al-Awwal 1275 A.H.¹

After the battle of Balakot (1831) he returned to Bengal

1. The date of his death is known ^{from} a letter addressed to Maulana Mati al-Rahman on 26th of September, 1974, by Maulana Muhammad Ezharul-Haq, Sufia, Nizampur Madrasah, Chittagong. Dr. Enamul Huq : Muslim Bangla Sahitya, p.106.

and engaged himself in preaching the message of Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah established by his teacher, Sayyid Ahmad in the remotest corner of Bengal, after making permanent settlement in Nizampur Pargana at Maliash. Although, establishment of Madrasah was not feasible in the short time, to attract the people and to train up the people in the Principles of religion of Islam, he established a Khānqah adjacent to his mosque where a good number of people used to assemble there to listen to him and equip themselves with the main provisions of the Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah. He was althrough a celebrate till his death.

Sufi Nur Muhammad had only one sister named Amana Bibi. She was married to one Najmuddin Bhuiyan of Nizampur Pargana. He was blessed with a son, named Shaikh Abd al-Rahman and one of the sons of Abd al-Rahman was Abd al-Ghani. Abd al-Ghani left five sons and they were Shaikh Nur Ahmad Munshi, Shaikh Abd al-Rauf, Maulvi Shaikh Abd al-Aziz, Shaikh Muhammad Mian and Shaikh Siddique Ahmad. Shaikh Nur Ahmad Munshi had three sons -----Shaikh Mujib al-Haq, Shaikh Sayyid al-Haq and Maulana Badal Haq. Shaikh Mujib al-Haq had no offspring, on the other hand Shaikh Sayyid al-Haq died earlier leaving two sons ---one was Ezhar-al-Haq and the other was Zainal Abedin. The present care taker of Sufi Nur Muhammad's Shrine, Maulana Shaikh Badal al-Haq was the grand son of Shaikh Abd al-Rahman, the nephew of Sufi Nur Muhammad. The present Pesh Imam (who leads the prayer) of the mosque, adjacent to the shrine, Maulana Dia al-Haq, the son of Shaikh Abd al-Aziz is the cousin of Maulana Ezhar al-Haq.¹ In order to keep

1. Muhammad Mafti al-Rahman: Aina-i-Waisi, pub. Patna, A.D. 1976, pp.121-122. The information has also been collected on the spot by of the present writer from the descendants of the Sufi Sahib.

the memory of Sufi Nūr Muhammad, a Madrasah was established by Maulāna 'Abd al-Ghānī in A.D.1904, in the name of Madrasah-i-Sufiā Nuriāh at the instance of his Pir Abu Bakr Siddique, popularly known as Pir of Phurphura Sharif of Hugli district (India). Abu Bakr Siddique is in line with the Silsilah of Sufi Nūr Muhammad through Fateh 'Alī Waisī, the Khalifa of Sufi Nūr Muhammad (R.A.).

Another brilliant writer of the History of Chittagong,¹ the Khalifa of Sufi Nūr Muhammad records with pleasure, and greatly acknowledges the admonition of his teacher sent through the messenger to him in regard to the historic mosque--- Jāme-mosque, situated in the nerve-centre of the city built by Nawāb Shaista Khān in (1078 A.H., A.D.1667).

In the facade of the mosque the following Persian inscription was put up:²

خداوندی سلاطین قدر دیندار + روح دین پاک مصطفی کرد
خرد گفنا بلو تاریخ تعمیر + بحالم کعبه ثانی بنا کرد

"He is such a lord who commands respect from the princes, and a pious one; who promoted the holy religion of Mustafa (the Prophet)!"

"Wisdom said, tell the date of its construction; 'A second Kaba has been erected in the world', the year 1078 A.H./A.D.1667." "

1. Maulvi Hamid Allah Khan: Ahādith al-Khawānīn, pub, from Calcutta, in 1871.
2. Shams-ud-din Ahmed: Inscriptions of Bengal, vol. IV, pp.287-88, figure 55, also see plate VII (A).

After the occupation of Chittagong by the English, they turned the mosque into a magazine for storing arms and amunitions. As a result prayers could not be held in the mosque for nearly one hundred years. This incidence extremely shocked Sufi Nur Muhammad. He felt that by calling the mosque the second Kaba, the builders incurred the displeasure of Allah. Therefore, he asked his disciple Hamid Allah Khan to erase the verse mentioned above forthwith, on the ground that it earned the wrath of Allah, because in the inscription the mosque was called the second Kabah.¹ Accordingly, Hamid Allah Khan aroused the sentiment of public to restore the mosque to its former position. Petitions were sent to the English government by the residents of Chittagong and finally in A.D.1856, the mosque was handed over to the Muslims for saying prayer.²

One of the exponents of Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah and who propagated the movement in Bengal was Imam al-din Bangali, an inhabitant of Raushanabad of Hajipur Pargana of Anbarabad.³ He was a Spiritual brother (Pir Bhai) of Sufi Nur Muhammad. Later he made his permanent settlement at village Sadullahpur of Sudharam in the district of Noakhali. Maulana Imam al-din had the opportunity to perform Haj twice along with his teacher (Pir Sahib), once in A.D.1823 and the other in A.D.1857 and died near Aden, while returning home after performing Haj.⁴ His descendants are still flourishing in Sadullahpur. In commemoration of Sufi Nur Muhammad and his Pir Bhai Imam al-din Bangali, Khan Bahadur Hamid

1. Muhammad Muti al-Rahman: Aina-i-Waisi, pp.122-123.

2. Hamid Allah Khan: Ahadith al-Khawana, pp.318-330.

3. Ibid, pp.124-126.

4. Ibid, pp.126-127.

Allah Khan wrote another book in Persian entitled ----- 'Anwar al-Nirain fi-Akhbar al-Khairain' to appreciate the services of these two generals of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid but the book could not be published. A manuscript copy of the book was recovered from the Library of Imam al-din Bangali and during Maulana 'Alim Allah's time the book was burnt to ashes in a fire incidence.¹ The cloak of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid and his broken sword are still found in the custody of 'Alim Allah. The other associate of Sufi Nur Muhammad was Maulana Karamat Ali of Jaunpur, who by dint of his profound genius, started advocating the Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement founded by his Pir Sahib (teacher) in this part of Bengal. He was born in Muharram 8, (in A.H.1215, A.D.1800) at Mullahatela, Jaunpur. He was proficient in Muslim law and Traditions of the Prophet. He learnt Muslim law from Maulana Shah Abd al-Aziz and his nephew Ismail Shahid and had his baiyat from Sayyid Ahmad Shahid. Maulana Karamat Ali Jaunpuri was the most important disciple of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid in Bengal (1800-1873). He was engaged in missionary activities in Bengal when the battle of Balakot took place. He was a successful organizer and for nearly forty years he moved up and down, the riverine areas of Bengal carrying the message of regeneration and reform amongst Muslims. Maulana Karamat Ali did not consider British India to be Dar al-Harb and issued Fatwa urging Muslims to lead a normal life and attend Friday prayers. With unsurpassed zeal he

1. 'Alim Allah's identity is not known. Obaidul Haq : Tadhkira-i-Aulyiah-i-Bangala, pub, Feni 1969, p.308.

dedicated himself to the double task of combating Hindu customs and superstitions, which had crept into the practice of Islam in Bengal, and trying to bring back into the fold of orthodoxy the new heterodox schools, which had grown up as a result of the Faraidi movement.¹

Maulana Karamat 'Ali served with dedication the principles of religion of Islam to the general mass in order to arouse in them the intrinsic values of Islam and also to save the innocent mass from doing Shirk and Bid'at (Association ^{with} the oneness of Allah and innovations). that was in vogue in them. Nawwab 'Abd al-Latif was the first man who responded to his call and extended all possible help to the Maulana in this regard.² Maulana Karamat 'Ali with the assistance of Nawwab 'Abd al-Latif engaged himself with much vigour and courage to educate the people strictly in accordance with the injunctions of the holy Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet. In this connexion he started writing Fatwas (legal decisions or opinions) to efface the doubts from the hearts of the millions of Muslims. In conformity with his movement the Maulana wrote some valuable books--- namely, Radd al-Balaghut, Dafi'al-Waswas, Urdu translation of Shama-il-i-Tirmidhi, Translation of Mishkat al-Masabih, and Miftah al-Jannat are worth mentioning. In consideration of his

1. Sayyid Murtada 'Ali : Saints of Bangladesh, pub, Oxford University Press, 1971, pp.19-20.

2. Nawwab 'Abd al-Latif Khan Bahadur, C.I.E. was born in Faridpur. During the 19th century, he was a great leader of the Muslims in Bengal. He was appointed minister in the Government of Bhupal. He opposed the movement of Haji Shariat Allah in Bengal and in A.D. 1863 founded the Muhammadian literary Society in order to combat that movement and encouraged the people of Bengal to learn English. Mauz-i-Mauthar, Shaikh Muhammad Ikram, pp.138-139.

services rendered to the nation, Maulana Sulaiman al-Nadavi remarks "No one has served for the people of Bengal as has been extended by Maulana Karamat 'Ali."¹

At the same time another associate of Sufi Nur Muhammad was Maulana Shah Gulzar Mulla who was an ardent follower of Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah. We know little concerning the events of his life. His mazar (shrine) is situated at Senarchar, P.S.Daudkandi, district Comilla.² His family members are found here. At present his grand son ^{WA}Khawja Aftab al-din is the sajjadanashin.

In spite of his decaying age, ^{WA}Khawja Aftab al-din kept himself busy in teaching and preaching. The Divine spiritual guidance of Maulana Gulzar Mulla covered the area of Dhaka, Sylhet and Comilla. One of the Sufis of his silsilah was Shah Ahsan Allah Siddiqui of Dhaka, who made tremendous development in the spiritual line. A book has been published in Bengali by Maulana Abd al-Majid with the name and title of "Dhaka Moahuri-Kholar Hadrat Qibla". Though Shah Ahsan Allah could not meet Shah Gulzar Mulla, he enjoyed the companionship of two generals of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid----Maulana Imam al-din Bangali of Noakhali and Maulana Karamat 'Ali of Jaunpur and remained closed to their association and chanced to take part in religious activities with them. Shah Ahsan Allah also witnessed Sufi Nur Muhammad and his disciple Sufi Fateh 'Ali Waisai, Chatgami. He was born twenty seven years before the birth of Fateh 'Ali Waisai and died forty years after him.³

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1. Maulvi Mati al-Rahman Aina-i-Waisi, p.130.
 2. A letter written by Maulana Sayyid Muhammad Bashir al-din, Dhaka to Mati al-Rahman ---the author of the book, Aina-i-Waisi.
 3. Maulvi Mati al-Rahman : Aina-i-Waisi, pp.136-140.

Shah Ahsan Allah Siddiqi had three sons --- Shah Abd al-Aziz, Shah Abd al-Latif and Shah Abd al-Hannan. Shah Abd al-Aziz being senior to and brilliant among the brothers inherited the spiritual position of his late father Shah Ahsan Allah Siddiqi. He breathed his last in February, 1948 at the age of 78 and is lying buried near the Mazar of his father at Shah Sahib-lane, Dhaka. It is to be stated that Sayyid A.B. Mahmud Husain was the son-in-law of Shah Abd al-Aziz. He had his baiat from his father-in-law and obtained permission to educate people on this spiritual Tariqah. Sayyid A.B. Mahmud Hussain was the Chief Justice of Bangladesh Supreme Court and died a few years back after his retirement. He was the descendant of Sayyid Nasir al-din---- a General of Sultan Shams al-din Firuz Shah and the conqueror of Sylhet.¹ He was so pious a man whose Fazr prayer was never delayed or missed. He conquered Sylhet with the assistance of Shah Jalal Muzarrad. It is clear to assess the spiritual strength of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid whose divine guidance ushered in an era of Islamic revivalism in Bengal through his followers. On his arrival in Bengal, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid Brelvi stationed at Calcutta in order to invite the people to join his movement. Amongst the followers of this movement, the services and sacrifices rendered by these two Generals should have been gratefully acknowledged. In fact through these two generals of the Sayyid, the movement gained grounds in the nook and corner of Bengal. One of them

1. Sayyid Nasir al-din was the Commander-in-Chief of Firuz Shah Dehlavi of Gaud. The Emperor sent him to assist his nephew Sikandar Khan Ghazi against Gaud Govinda in Sylhet; See Aina-i-Waisi, pp.27-28.

hailed from Noakhali and the other from the Nizampur Pargana of Chittagong. At that time some un-Islamic practices crept into the Muslim society and so a religious reform movement was necessary. It is said that people used to throng at Bagan Bari of Munshi Amin al-din, to listen to the admonitions of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid to get themselves acquainted with the essence of Islam. Hence in this way, the people got rid of Shirk and Bid'at (associations with Allah and innovations in Islam). In order to convey the message of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid to contiguous areas of Bengal, Maulana Imam al-din Bangali returned to his homeland Noakhali and Sufi Nur Muhammad to Chittagong and then to Sylhet. In Noakhali, at least fifty persons from the adjacent areas of Comilla and Mymensingh joined him in the movement. On the other hand, leading personalities like 'Abd al-Hakim Chatgami,¹ Munshi Ibrahim of Mymensingh, whose identity is not known, and Sayyid Hamza of Arakan joined Sufi Nur Muhammad to lead the movement. After long two years' of his journey from Haj, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid returned to Calcutta via Bombay, stayed in Calcutta for sometime to strengthen his movement. Maulana Imam al-din Bangali was sent to East Bengal to cover the districts of Noakhali, Comilla, Dhaka and Mymensingh, Maulvi Barkat Allah to north Bengal and Sufi Nur Muhammad towards the adjoining areas of Calcutta. The main target of the movement was to bring about a reformation amongst people in Aqida and actions.

1. Maulana 'Abd al-Hakim finally settled at Chunati, nearly thirty miles away from the Chittagong city under the Sathania Police station, now under Lohagara upazila. One 'Alia-madrasah is established after his name as Chunati Hakimia 'Alia madrasah.

In the second phase of the movement it was to infuse amongst the people the complete code of Islam. In the third stage, it was envisaged to create all possible resistance against foreign powers. In the fourth and last stage of the movement it was to imbibe in the people, the sacrificial tendency with life and property and to this end assurance was being taken from the masses. Therefore, in the soil of Bengal with the assistance of Maulana Imam al-din, Sufi Nur Muhammad and Maulana Abd al-Hakim the movement gained tremendous success.

After performing Haj, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, made it a vow, as the Muslims were debarred from performing the daily prayers and other rituals independently, to wage war against the evil designs of the Sikhs. To this effect, Maulana Ismail Shahid, Maulana Abd al-Hye, Maulana Imam al-din Bangali and Sufi Nur Muhammad were directed to get the people assembled. One of the great poets of Urdu literature---Mumin Dehlawi was the disciple and Khalifa of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid. He composed poems on Jihad which were spread all over the Sub-continent. Sufi Nur Muhammad and other leading personalities engaged themselves in inciting the people towards the holy war by means of delivering lectures. Though we find that Sayyid Ahmad Shahid faced defeat and became victim of conspiracy by the English but ultimately his movement achieved far-reaching victory. The Mujahids of Bengal returned to their home land under the leadership of Maulana Imam al-din, Sufi Nur Muhammad and others mentioned above. These generals were well versed in religious knowledge, experienced in strategy and gave a new birth to this movement

but at the later stage the movement was split up into many factions. Through the gloom of depression----political, economic and religious, that enveloped Bengali Muslims in the 19th century, emerges the shining figure of Sufi Nur Muhammad as a beacon-light showing the right path.

From the above discussion it is evident that even after the death of the Generals of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid in Bengal the movement was not stopped, rather it earned a new impetus through the disciples of Sufi Nur Muhammad and others. One of the close disciples of Sufi Nur Muhammad, Sufi Fath 'Ali heads the list. Sufi Fateh Ali's Khalifa Maulana Abu Bakr of Phurphura and his followers, Maulana Nethar al-din of Sarsina and Maulana Ruhul Amin of 24 parganas are worth mentionable. These fellow disciples kept the banner of Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah aloft and spread up its essence in the remotest corners of Bengal inspite of many hurdles and impediments. As a result, the people of Bengal still tastes the true essence of Islam. Many epoch-making incidence are there, which speak of Sufi Nur Muhammad's miraculous actions.¹

Maulvi Hamid Allah Khan was a disciple of Sufi Nur Muhammad. As he says, he moved to and fro with yearning desire to quench his thirst for mystic knowledge and with this end in view once he appeared before a Sufi Nur Muhammad. Sufi Nur Muhammad refused to accept him as a disciple; this made Hamid Allah Khan very much perplexed ~~and~~ while he was returning with a broken heart, Sufi Sahib asked him whether Sufi Nur Muhammad possessed the quality of a Pir. Without answering the question,

1. Challish Auliyar Kahini, pp.527-529.

Hamid Allah Khan recited the following Persian verses:

”گفتم کز آدمی از دلبران شهر + غنیر زیر لب که ارادت مقیم است“

Trans: "I told, to whom I shall render my heart in the lovers of the city (i.e. whom shall I love ?), smiling the beloved said, desire is required first".

After listening to this self-composed verse of Hamid Allah Khan, Sufi Nur Muhammad asked him to go back to his residence and advised him to repeatedly read the following Darud Sharif :-

”اللهم صل على سيدنا محمد بن النبی الامی و آله و سلم“

Accordingly, Hamid Allah Khan went to his bed and recited the above Darud at night, so much so that he saw in a dream a beautiful garden, in the middle of the garden there was one attractive palace where in a guard was found on duty at the gateway of the palace. He asked the guard who lived in the palace, and who was the owner of the garden. In reply to the question, the guard said, it was a Heaven and asked him to go in, to see for himself the charming beauty of the palace. As soon as he entered into the palace with yearning desire, to his utter surprise, he saw Sufi Nur Muhammad standing on the verandah of the palace stretching his hands towards Hell and picked up a man from there and got him up in Heaven. On such unusual circumstances, the Khan Sahib asked about the mystery. Sufi Nur Muhammad apprised him of the fact that he had been permitted spiritually to get some people rid of the Hell-fire and he was one of them. Then Hamid Allah

Khan woke up from the sleep and very early in the morning attended the residence of Sufi Nur Muhammad while he was engaged in saying Fazar prayer. Being released from prayer, Sufi Sahib conversed with him on spiritual matters and asked him to narrate the dream he saw last night. Hamid Allah Khan discussed the mysterious dream before his Pir with veneration. While commenting on the dream, Sufi Nur Muhammad observed "when the screen goes away from the heart of Mumin (faithful) then Divine light enters into the heart, then many mysterious things of the unknown world come to his vision and a man like me that you have seen, he must have been a 'Wali'".¹ By such utterance, Sufi Nur Muhammad might have concealed his perfection in the domain of spiritualism.

Once at night a thief intended to enter into the house of Sufi Nur Muhammad with a view to stealing but it so happened, before entering into the house, the thief lost his eye sight. As a matter of fact, the thief could neither enter into the house nor he could get the way to flee away. At that time Sufi Nur Muhammad was deeply engaged in meditation. Finding no recourse, the thief started crying at the top of his voice which broke the meditation of Sufi Nur Muhammad. Later the thief repented for his misdeeds and the Sufi Sahib released him with some money.²

The English had become very much alarmed to see the war strategy and indomitable courage of Sufi Nur Muhammad with Sikhs, in the battles. Therefore, they became very much concerned, their and hence they

1. Ridwan al-Bari : Upohar, pp.33-34, pub, 1963, quoted from the book Anwar al-Nirain.

2. Challish Auliyar Kahini, p.529.

made secret plan to crush Sufi Nur Muhammad for ever, and to achieve this end, they gheraoed the mosque of Munshi-Ghulam al-Rahman in Calcutta where Sufi Sahib used to say his prayers regularly. Thanks to Almighty Allah, who by His Divine mercy saved His servant Sufi Nur-Muhammad from the evil design of the British and sent him to Assam un-noticed from his foes. With this incidence the wrath of the British became doubled than before. Therefore, they made further conspiracy to kill him and engaged a group of non-Muslim gundas for this purpose.¹ Once all on a sudden as they entered into the mosque with their nefarious motive, Sufi Nur Muhammad looked at them sharply, and at this all of them started shivering and arms fell-down from their hands and begged pardon for their misdeeds. Sufi Nur Muhammad forgave them with his serene character and on this strength all of them accepted "Islam. In order to avoid the horizen of miraculous actions of Sufi Nur Muhammad, a few have been selected to prove his mighty soul to win the hearts of the righteous. Suffice it is to say that his whole missionary life was full of miracles which he followed them with caution lest people go astray. As it reveals time and again, the sermons he delivered to his disciples on different occasions, strictly forbid his disciples to rely on his miracles but to follow the principles he left for them.²

Character:- He owned all the great qualities of the Prophet in him, all the dictum of the holy Quran and Prophetic traditions. No action

1. Ibid.

2. Challish Auliyar Kahini, pp.527-532, Ridhwanul-al-Haq : Upchar, pp.27-33, pub, 1963.

of his was found that were against the injunctions of the holy Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet. He always followed the Quranic injunctions and Prophetic traditions in his religious and day to day life. None of his disciples nor his associates could see him deviating even an inch from the path of Shariah, rather he was a strict follower of Hanafi Madhab. He took much interest in doing his work personally. He used to recite the holy Qur'an copying himself and wear the patched-up clothes. He was always alert to neatness and cleanliness in his routine life. Simplicity was the mode of his life. Pompous life was the subject of hatred and a path of deviation from Allah's remembrance. He was a friend of the poor, guide to the destitute and shelter to the orphan. The long span of his life, he spent for the service of mankind. The teachings and actions he left before us shall create an incentive for future generations. This noble soul died on November 1st in A.D. 1858 in the village Maliash now called Mithanala in Nizampur Pargana, Mirsarai, Chittagong.¹ His date of birth is not known and so also the name of his mother. His Namaj-i-Jana'ja was led by Maulana Akram Ali. No death anniversary is observed at his magar (shrine).² This is known from the present Mutawalli (care taker). But people throng together from every nook and corner of Bangal in order to celebrate the death anniversary of this great saint of the soil, through milad mahfil and dhikr.

1. Ridhwan al-Haq : Upahar, p.25.

2. The present Mutawalli did not allow me to take the snap of the mazar.

CHAPTER-VII
Sūfis of the 20th century
1. Shah Ahmad Allah

Maizbhandār Darbār Sharif is one of the most renowned places in the whole of Bengal; its fame has spread even outside the frontiers of our country. People from all over the country, and at one time from all over India^{used} to ~~to~~ through this place to pay homage to the soul of the two great Sūfis who are lying buried here, Maulānā Shah Ahmad Allāh and his nephew Maulānā Shah Ghulām al-Rahmān. Maiz bhandar is situated in the Fatik Chari Upazila of Chittagong district, about twenty five miles to the north of Chittagong town. Now a days pucca-road connects Maiz bhandar and communication has become easier.

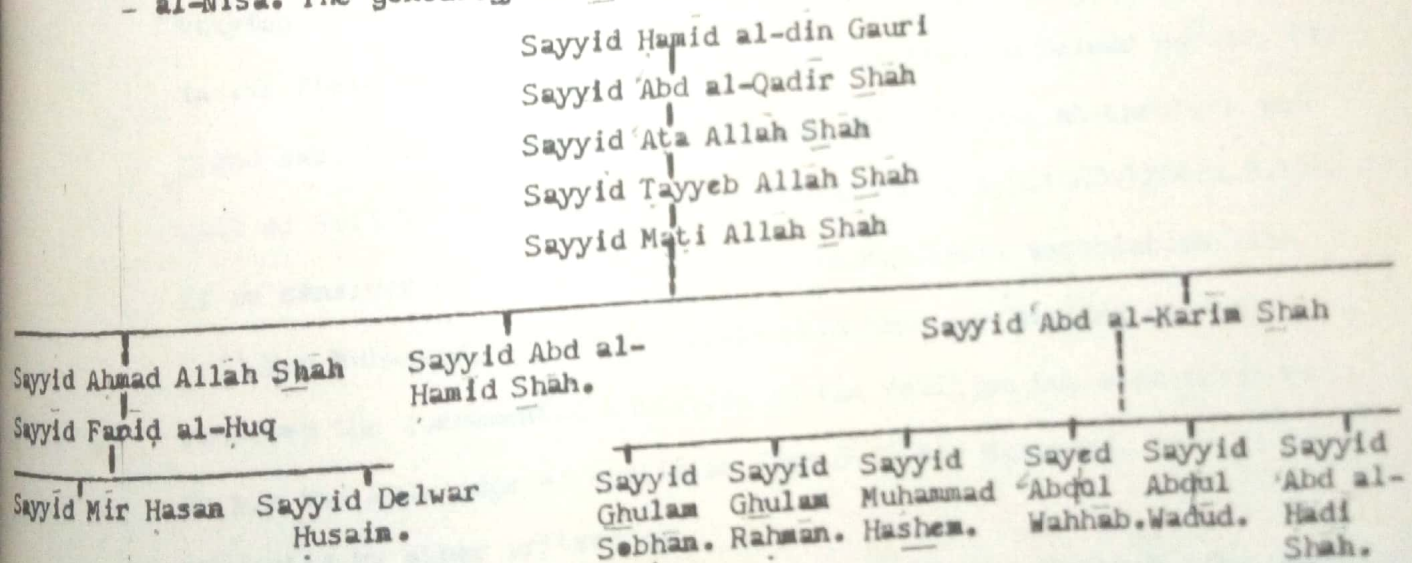
(A critical analysis of his place of birth). The birth place of the Maulana is Fatik Chari. According to philological concept, the word is derived from the word ফটিক meaning transparent¹. Therefore, the meaning of Fatik Chari is stream of purity. The name of the village is called Maiz bhandar² meaning mid-treasure. This centre was established as a mid-centre of food during the expedition of the Muslim soldiers against the Buddhist Kings. In course of time this Maizbhandar has been turned into the spiritual centre. Henceforth the birth place of the saints, Maiz bhandar became prominent as vestige of Wilāyat amongst the people in general and to the saints in particular. This place as if, has showered upon it, its infinite mercy, beautified it with its natural bounty and with glorious historic events.

Maulānā Shah Ahmad Allah comes of a very noble family and his genealogy connects him with the family of the Prophet. Maulānā's ancestors'

1. Sayyid Delwar Husain, Jibani'at Karāmat, p.41.

2. Ibid, pp.39-40.

migrated from Madina Manawwarah via Baghdad and Delhi and reached Gaud, the then capital of Bengal. After the evacuation of Gaud in A.D.1575 due to plague, Qadi Sayyid Hamid al-din Gauri settled in Patiya, Chittagong and from there, one of his sons, Sayyid Abd al-Qadir was appointed an Imam (one who leads the prayer) at Azim Nagar, in Fatik Chari thana, Chittagong.¹ Sayyid Abd al-Qadir had two sons, one was Ata Allah and the other was Tayyab Allah. Tayyab Allah the grand father of the Maulana has three sons: (1) Sayyid Ahmad Shah, (2) Sayyid Mati Allah and (3) Sayyid Abd al-Karim Shah and his middle son Maulana Mati Allah was the father of saint Maulana Shah Ahmad Allah. He was born on Wednesday, the 1st of Magh, A.D.1826 corresponding to A.H.1244. His mother's name was Khair-al-Nisa.² The genealogy of Shah Ahmad Allah is given below.³



1. Azim Nagar is now under Fatik Chari Upazila under the Greater Chittagong district. Sayyid Abd al-Qadir is the Great grand father of Shah Ahmad Allah (R.A.) Sayyid Badar al-duza; Baba Bhandari, p.16.
2. M. Obaid al-Haq : Bangladesher Pir Auliyaqan, p.115.
3. Sayyid Badar al-Duza, Hadrat Baba Bhandari, p.17.

His education:- The Maulana received his primary education at his village maktab. After that he received his education at 'Azim Nagar of Fatik Chari thana from Maulana Muhammad Shafi, who was an eminent scholar and an intuitive personality. After the end of his primary education, the thirst for higher education dragged him to Calcutta and he got himself admitted in the Madrasah-i-Allia Calcutta in A.H.1260/A.D.1844 and studied al-Qur'an, Hadith, Fiqh, Tafsir and Philosophy with uncommon credit and ended his student career in that Madrasah as an erudite scholar. It is an important point to note that the Maulana from the beginning to the end of his stay in Calcutta received his education under the guidance and supervision of Sufi Nur Muhammad, staying at his residence upto A.H.1268/A.D.1851,¹ who was a mighty soul in the field of mysticism.² It is stated by Maulana Delwar Husain, his grand son, that Maulana Ahmad Ullah had already been at the beck and call of Sufi Nur Muhammad as his guardian since A.H.1260-1268/A.D.1844-1851. If we consider these long periods of the Maulana's association with Sufi Nur Muhammad, it can be safely said that the Maulana not only received the fundamental education on the religion but also treasured in him the knowledge of mysticism from Sufi Nur Muhammad. This is also supported by other writers :-

"হযরত মাওলানা আহমদ উল্লাহ (রঃ) নাজিরহাট স্টেশনের নিকটবর্তী মাইজ ভান্ডার গ্রামে জন্ম গ্রহন করেন । তিনি দেশে কিছুদিন লেখাপড়া শিখা করিয়া পরে উচ্চ শিখা লাভের জন্য কলিকাতায় গিয়া সেখানে শিক্ষালাভ করেন । কলিকাতায় শিখা সমাপ্ত করিয়া তিনি হযরত মাওলানা শাহ সুফী নূর মুহম্মদ নিয়ামপুরী (রঃ) এর নিকট বাইয়াত গ্রহন করিয়া বহুদিন সাধনার পর কামালিয়াত হাসিল করেন । তিনি জীবনের প্রথম অবস্থায় মাদ্রাসায় শিখা সমাপ্ত করিয়া কলিকাতা আশীয়া মাদ্রাসায় ও কিছুদিন শিক্ষতা করিয়াছিলেন "।³

1. Sayyid Delwar Husain, Wilayet-i-Mutkilaqa, p.42.

2. Sufi Nur Muhammad of Mallash, Chittagong was the Khalifa of Hadrat Sayyid Ahmad Shahid Brelvi, the founder of Tariqa-i-Muhammadi. (see supra, p.136).

3. Rashid Ahmad, Bangladesher Sufi Shadhak, p.39, pub, March 1974, Dhaka.

Spiritual knowledge:- The Maulana took his second Baiyat (oath of fealty) from Shaikh-Sayyid Abū Shahma whose parentage was linked up with Shaikh Muhi al-din Abd al-Qadir Jili. It is said that Hadīrat Abū Shahma was pleased to bestow upon him the initiation of celestial knowledge and honoured him with different kinds of food as a mark of hospitality. During his stay at Calcutta, he was advised to fulfil his further thirst of ascetic knowledge from his (Abū Shahma) elder brother Sūfi Sayyid Delwar Ali Pakbāj Muhajer-i-Madani Lahori, who was a celebrate, and accordingly the Maulana placed himself at his disposal.¹

(His matrimonial and worldly life).

In Observing unusual condition of the Maulana, his mother gave him in marriage with -- Sayyidah Alfalnesā, the daughter of Munshi Sayyid Afaz al-din of Azim Nagar. After six months of their marriage, his wife met an immature-death, but his mother again in the same year i.e.A.H.1276/A.D.1859 got him married with his sister-in-law --- Sayyidah Lutfalnesā who was intelligent and extremely beautiful. The Maulana was blessed with three daughters and a son. Three of them died at an early age but the son, though got a longer-life died in his life time leaving two sons, --- Sayyid Delwar Husain and Sayyid Mir Hasan. Since A.H.1276 to A.H.1278 i.e.A.D.1859 to A.D.1861, the Maulana occasionally offered sermon and used to attend Mahfil-i-Milad and also accepted invitation of the people in a very rare case. Therefore, upto nine years the Maulana made frantic efforts and unusual devotion towards ascetic creed in search of his

1. Sayyid Delwar Husain, Jibani 'O' Karāmat, p.36.

cherished desire, the celestial power to know the unknown mystery of Almighty Allah and to gain the incessant shower of blessings of the prophet(s), completely unaware of worldly affairs, even of his domestic life. He then declared his abhorrence, on the score of his spiritually acquired power of (توکل علی اللہ) reliance on Allah, towards his paternal property and asked his brothers to look after these and he was content with whatever share was given to him by his brothers.¹

Maulana's eminence in the spiritual advancement of Wilāyat and its manifestation.

After the fulfilment of spiritual teachings from different spiritualists,

the Maulāna became a staunch supporter of Tarīqat fully in keeping with the cardinal principles of Sharī'ah. At this stage, the Maulana became very much inclined towards Chishtia Tarīqa and attained interminate (نیض) blessings from Khawāja Mu'in al-dīn Chishtī (R.A.) at his own indication and in aid of such power, has resulted in the manifestation of his power of Wilāyat at far and wide. Therefore, the Wilāyat-i-Muqaiadah (ولایت مقیدہ) has been turned into Wilāyat-i-Mutlaqah (ولایت مطلقہ) which encompasses all the roads of Wilāyat in it,² which considers the different religious doctrines; though these differ with each other, their destination is one which drags the people towards the real perspective of the religion of Islam. In the aforesaid analysis, the Wilāyat-i-Mutlaqah-i-Ahmadi, might be the offshoot of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadi whose exponent, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid Berlvi has

1. Ibid.,

2. Sayyid Delwar Husain, Wilāyat-i-Mutlaqah, pp.58-59.

explained that the Tariqah is the Tariqah of the Prophet himself and he observes the same in the following way, 'My troops are like those Muhajirs, (i.e. who accompanied the Prophet in his flight to Madinah), who came out to serve the interests of the religion of God and risked their lives with enthusiasm'.¹ In another place of the same book he says, 'We have forsaken our family and relatives in order to carry out the traditions of the Prophet'.²

Again this interpretation of the Tariqah is further supported by the fact that in the 'Sirat al-Mustaqim',³ Sayyid Ahmad Shahid divides his programme of reform into two constituent parts, which he calls rah or path and in Arabic is called Tariqah ----- one is rah-i-Wilayat or the path of mysticism and the other is rah-i-Nabuwat or the path of prophecy, one being complementary to the other.⁴ In other words in his programme of reform, he attempted a synthesis of shari'ah (the legal system) with tariqah (mysticism). As the only gate of entrance to his reform movement was through (mystic) initiation i.e. Baiyat-i-Tawbah, it is not possible to disjoint mysticism from the rest of the programme of his reform. In his explanation of Baiyat-i-tawbah (i.e. well known procedure of initiation into the mystic orders of the Sufis) the Sayyid says,⁵ 'First of all the seeker of this path (i.e. the path of Prophecy)

1. Ghulam Rasul Mehr, Jam'at-i-Mujahidin, p.69.

2. Ibid, p.68.

3. Sirat-ul-Mustaqim: This is a most authentic work on the reform programme of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid written by Shah Ismail Shahid. Muin-ud-din Ahmad Khan, History of the Fara'idi Movement in Bengal, p.11.

4. Shah Ismail Shahid, Sirat al-Mustaqim, (copy Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Pakistan, Dhaka), p.1f.

5. Ibid, p.144.

ought to attend to the prohibitions of the Shari'ah relating to faith, action, morality, instinct, desire and prayer. He must seek and find out the rules from the Qur'an and prophetic tradition. If he possesses the knowledge of the Qur'an and the Prophetic tradition, he must find them out himself or else he must enlighten himself from the opinions of the learned scholars of the Prophetic tradition."

Hence it is clear that mysticism of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid was nothing specifically separate from his programme of reviving Prophetic tradition. In one opinion the Tariqah as has been introduced by the Maulana ^(Maulana Shah Ahmad Ali) Wilayat-i-Mutlaqa is almost similar to that of the Tariqah-i-Muhammadi. Therefore, in order to clarify the above observation, it is essential to reproduce the basic principles of the Maulana's Wilayat-i-Mutlaqa that synthesises with that of Tariqah-i-Muhammadi. The following principles will justify the above statement.¹

The Maulana also followed the principles of the holy Qur'an and the prophetic tradition, without following these principles none can claim the eligibility of having 'Sirat al-Mustaqim' or the path of Hidayat and this is the only way which is interlinked with the path of Nabuwat which embodies the path of Shari'ah including the Tabligh (i.e. the deliverance of sermons from the holy Qur'an and prophetic tradition). Secondly the Maulana emphasises his principle on (لا اله الا الله) i.e. Allah is the creator of all things which is a Prime symbol of Nabuwat. Thirdly---- (لا اله الا الله) (i.e. besides the existence of Allah, other existence is false). In mystic language

1. Maulana Delwar Husain, Wilayat-i-Mutlaqa, p.102.

it is called (همه ارادست) (i.e. All are He). Maulana Rumi has explained its gist in the following manner.....¹

دل چون بر آواز عقل پیر زرد + زان نصیب هم برود دیر
'(i.e. when the heart of a man is cast on the illuminated heart of his Pīr, by a portion of such illumination, the inner eyes of his (Murīd) is also illuminated').

It is in keeping with the nature of humanism which attracts the people towards (تصدیق بالجنان) belief in a purifying manner and displays it in the character of a man in a remodelling way, - not to check the decadence in character, rather it helps the people to ameliorate the standard of character in man, so that the people of this cadre could understand mystery of Allah and the importance of Khatm-i-Nabuwat.

Defination of Wilāyat-i-Mutlaqah.

In explaining the Wilāyat-i-Mutlaqah, it is said that in order to eface the idolatry, atheism and imported culture from various religious, the Maulana, just to save the people from the utter ruination of Islamic principles which is common for all and acceptable to the people in letter and spirit, because the religion of Islam is a universal religion,² which is consistent with those of the principles of Tariqah-i-Muhammadi of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd, the exponent of the Tariqah as discussed earlier.³

1. Mathnavi-i-Maulana Rumi as quoted in the Wilāyat-i-Mutlaqah, p.103.
2. Maulana Belwar Husain, Wilāyat-i-Mutlaqah, p.68.
3. Supra, p.8.,

His Inclination towards Sharīah.

The only grand son of the Maulana, Sayyid Delwar Husain remarks 'The Maulana was always in the habit of performing five times prayer a day. His inclination was found very much towards (صلاة النفل) i.e. additional prayers, recitation of the holy Qurān was his daily routine and he was always fond of keeping fasting along with Muraqabah and Mushahidah'.¹ The above quotation of the Maulana's grandson leaves no room to doubt the Maulana's attitude towards Sharīah. In his private life also Maulana Shāh Ahmad Allah was a man of serene character. He was a staunch follower of the sunnah of the prophet. In his domestic life; he was very much liberal and compromising in words and actions. He abhorred prodigality and preferred ecstasy and indifference to worldly life. The Maulana was a symbol of commiseration. He showed kindness and respect to all irrespective of caste and creed. He abhorred at heart wearing of ornaments by the women folk and leading a luxurious life by both male and female. The Maulana in his mystic life had allowed access to the people to his residence irrespective of caste and creed. He welcomed them and served them without making any difference, based on the principle of humanism, making no distinction regarding caste, creed and religion; treating them all as servants of Allah which is the real essence of the Sūfis. In synthesising both Sharīah and M'arifāt (Mysticism) the Maulana founded a new Tariqah which is popularly known as Tariqah-i-Maizbhandari.

Tariqah-i-Maizbhandari:- Wilāyat-i-Mutlaqah is known as Tariqah-i-Maizbhandari amongst the people.² In this tariqah, a group of people

1. Maulana Delwar Husain, Jibani 'O' Karamat, pp.188-192.

2. Maulana Delwar Husain, Wilayat-i-Mutlaqah, p.122.

during their ecstatic condition prefer to dance and songs and some prefer to devote themselves to deep meditation in seclusion in Dhikr (ذکر) and they never consider their Murshid (Pir) severed from the Prophet and the Almighty Allah, rather they feel themselves لقاء بالله، لقاء في الله، الرسول

Their conjecture is, as the word is hidden in the meaning, hence the meaning cannot be isolated from the word. Therefore, a perfect Murshid cannot be separable from Allah and His Prophet. Illustrating this point, Maulana 'Abd al-Rahman Fatehabadi argues,

(i.e. when the light of Allah entered into the shape of Muhammad(s), then where had been Muhammad ?)¹ Further Maulana 'Abd al-Rahman Fatehabadi placed an authentic hadith in favour of his point.²

(i.e. Allah has created Adam according to his shape.) Again the Maulana 'Abd al-Rahman quotes some couplets from the Mathnawi of Maulana Rumi³. (1). Whenever you accept the existence of your Pir, then you should acknowledge that Allah and His Prophet live in the existence of your Pir. (2). If you consider it segregated, then you will loose the main book and its Preface as well. (3) Don't see two, Don't know two, don't speak two, but trust that a man of perfection has been delved in the oneness of Allah'.

1. Maulana 'Abd al-Rahman, Ghory-i-Raj Mathnawi, P, 7, pub, Lucknow, 1955.
2. Maulana Delwar Husain: Wilayat-i-Mutlagah, p 122.
3. Ibid, as quoted from Mathnawi-i-Rumi

(۱) چون قوتات پیر را کرد قبول + هم خدا در ذاتش آید هم مول
 (۲) اگر چنانچه ترا این خواجه را + هم کنی هم من هم دریاچه را
 (۳) دوستان در زمین در درختان + خواجه در ذاتش آید هم مول

On the above observation of the Maulāna Abd al-Rahmān Fatehābādī, Sayyid Delwar Husain adds an important feature to the Maizbhandari Tariqah, quoting a couplet, which Maulāna Rumi had told about the Pīr of Hadrat Bayazid Bistāmī "know that service to me is as service to Allah and His praise and don't think that Allah is isolated from me".¹

In this context, Maulāna Delwar Husain gives his opinion that those who exactly submerged in the celestial love of Allah and His Prophet and also subdued the cardinal passions could know the mystery of Allah which is not conceivable to all. Therefore, the Tariqah-i-Maizbhandari is the assimilation of the ways of Shari'at, Tariqat, Haqiqat and Ma'arifat, that the founder of this Tariqah followed the above ways during his life time and also professed his followers to follow these prolific to know Allah and His Prophet. Nowadays this Tariqah has been spread over Bangladesh and attained mass popularity. But unfortunately some innovations (بدعات) entered into its fold after the death of the founder of the Tariqah. Saiyyid Murtaza 'Alī in his book² has given the following observation, "Hadrat Shah Ahmad Ullah, originator of Maizbhandari Tariqah, was born at Maizbhandar, Fatikchari, 26 miles north of Chittagong city in 1827. He was a profound scholar and a great mystic. He died in 1905. On the 10th of Magh every year thousands of his followers gather to celebrate his 'Urs'. Hadrat Shah

1. Maulāna Rūmī, Mathnawī p-150, vol. II, p.150, pub, Lucknow.

2. Saiyyid Murtaza 'Alī, Saints of Bangladesh, p.23, pub: Oxford University press in 1971.

Ahmad Ullah was succeeded by his nephew Shah Ghulam al-Rahman who became equally famous as a mystic saint. He revived the Maulawia creed of mystics. A stereotyped music and dance form a part of their ecstatic communion. He died in 1936. His 'Urs' is held every year on the 22nd of Chaitra."

Shah Ghulam al-Rahman about whom we shall discuss below, initiated the Maulawia tariqah, on which dhikr is accompanied by dance and music which was not at all found during the time of Sayyid Maulana Ahmad Allah, the originator of the Maizbhandari Tariqah.

His power of intuition:- The influence of the saints and sufis on the growth of the Muslim society as well as to purify the soul of the people, plays an important role. Such influence may be classified under the following heads:-

- (a). Imparting of religious instructions,
- (b). Intuitive power,
- (c). Influence over the mass through the aid of miracles.

(A)

The Maulana by dint of his inherent genius and accomplished character, influenced the society enormously. At the dawn of his saintly life, the Maulana engaged himself as a teacher in the Matia buruj madrasah and Calcutta madrasah-i-Alia. After a few years of his service to these madrasahs, the Maulana returned to his home land Chittagong and started imparting religious instructions to the people of his own district and also in the various places of the country through delivering sermons and attending Mahfils (religious gathering). The Maulana also built up a

Khanqah in order to gear up the religious preachings, where large number of people assembled to share his association and to derive benefit out of his discussions. On the strength of his intuitive power, Maulana's position went on stealthily forward. Once¹ Shah Sufi Maulana Sayyid Masih Allah during the time of Tahazzud prayer (prayer performed at the later part of the night) saw the Maulana in the mosque of Maulvi Bashir Allah at Katalganj, in deep meditation even after the Fazr prayer was over. The eyes of Maulana Shah Ahmad Allah became red as he was engaged in meditation through out the night. After he freed himself from meditation, he told the Sayyid Sahab smilingly, "Please listen to me, I have ousted the Christians from the collectorate office, situated on the hill-top area (presently known as Haji Mohsin College) and there I offer you a chair, the second chair is for Maulana Khoda Nawaz, third one for Maulana Dhulfiqar 'Ali and the fourth one for Sufi Abd al-Wadud." Maulana Masih Allah could not understand what the Maulana had said. After eight years, had elapsed, the court building was shifted from the (present Haji Mohsin College) to the present Court building and in the vacated court building, and the then Muhsinia madrasah was established and the four persons mentioned above were appointed teachers there. Amongst the four, ~~two are known to me~~ one is Maulana Dhulfiqar 'Ali who was the father of Shams al-Ulania Maulana Kamal al-din and the other was Sufi Abd al-Wadud--the son-in-law of Maulana Muhammad Nader and I had the opportunity of being his student at Madrasah-i-Alia Darul 'Ulum, Chittagong

1. Maulana Delwar Husain, Jibani 'O' Karamat, p.54.

while he was (Sufi Abd al-Wadud) retired from the Muhsiniyah Madrasah.

The second religious institution---the establishment of the present Hathazari madrasah was also foretold by Shah Ahmad Allah.¹

Long before the establishment of this madrasah, once the Maulana went out of his Kānqah on foot and reached ~~at~~ Hathazari and halted just at the place where the present Hathazari madrasah is situated, and fore-told that "Here comes out the fragrance of the holy Qurān and the tradition of the Prophet."

Therefore, the Maulana fixed up the place of the Madrasah. This miraculous incidence of the Maulana has been narrated by Maulana

Nazir Ahmad in the 4th volume of his book entitled (نور الكافين).²

One more Madrasah was also established after his name الشيخ محمد علي¹ at Nagirhat which was also the result of intuitive power of the Maulana. It is said that a banyan tree was there and the Maulana occasionally used to sit down under the tree. Once the Maulana hung up a page of the holy Qurān on the branch of the tree and fore-told that in course of time a madrasah and a mosque would be established here. After a few years, it was found that a Madrasah and a mosque were built up and the Maulana advised the people present before him, to study in that madrasah.

(C)

His miracles :- Those who are chosen by Allah and His Prophet, Allah has clearly given for them a message of happy outcome here and

1. Ibid.

2. Maulana Delwar Husain, Jibqī 'O' Karamat, p.56.

hereafter, Allah declares الايان اولياء لا خوف عليهم ولا هم يحزنون

(Now surely the friends of Allah they have no fear nor do they grieve.¹

In another verse Allah says, ولا يحيطون بشئ من علمه الا بما شاء 2

(And they encompass nothing of His knowledge except what^{He}/pleases) to know the unknown.

The above verses of the holy Qur'an remind us the fact that (علم الخيب) to know the unknown mystery of Allah is an absolute power of Allah. Sometimes He confers such knowledge and power on some of His choosen servants whom He pleases. Therefore, the Auliya (i.e. those who occupy their position to Allah as His nearest servants by virtue of their unspotted obedience, selfless sacrifice the overcoming the trials of Allah, is granted intuitive power and miracles to guide the people on the right path ---- the path that is shown by His Prophet. Hence Maulana Ahmad Allah ^{now} is also granted such powers to crush the unruly practices, namely Shirk, Bid'at and other vices that prevailed over the Muslim society in particular and over the mass in general. The following miracles of Maulana Shah Ahmad Allah are known :-

(A)

(1). It is said that before every Friday prayer, after performing ablution the Maulana used to go adjacent to a small bridge of a canal near his house and went out of sight. People believe that he performed his Jum'a prayer in Makka Mu'azzama. This incident is related by many

1. Al-Quran, S:x, V:62.

2. Al-Quran, S:II, V:339.

of his followers.¹ (ii). A keen fighting was going on between the Burmese and the Britishers. One day before the defeat of the Burmese, the Maulana took a stick in his hand and was scolding someone in angry mood. It was thought that he was beating some one by the stick and did not have a rest for a minute all day long. In the mid night the Maulana cried out that the Queen had won the victory,² and after that he took his meal. The following day it was declared officially that the Queen achieved her victory against the Burmese.

(iii). One Babu Umesh Chandra Roy, Sub-Inspector, Fatikchari thana, under Chittagong district made out a fraudulent case against the Zamindar Abul Hasan Chowdhury, on charge of forging coins and chargesheeted his father Zinnat Ali Chowdhury and his uncle Amin al-Rahman and both of them were arrested and prosecuted in the criminal court. At last both of them were honourably acquitted; on the other hand, police sub-Inspector Babu Umesh Chandra Roy was punished and dismissed from the service for making such fabricated case. After ten months of his dismissal from the service, the Inspector made his appearance before the Maulana. The Maulana at the very outset scolded him but later consoled him saying that the (the Maulana) had made him the king of the Burmese government. After one week of the Maulana's forecast Babu Umesh Chandra received an appointment letter and he was appointed for the second time as Police Inspector of Cox's Bazar.³

(iv). A man of Chittagong having attacked by an incurable disease, attended to the residence of the Maulana and prayed for recovery.

1. M.Obaid al-Haq, Bangladesher Pir Auliagan, pp.115.
2. Ibid, p.116. The First Burmese War took place in 1824-26, the Second in 1852 and the Third in 1885. (V.D.Mahajan, British Rule in India and After, New Delhi, 1973, PP.103, 168 and 218). In 1826, i.e. during the First Burmese War Shah Ahmed Allah was born, in 1852, he was twenty six years' old and could not attain spiritual development. So the reference here is to the Third Burmese War held in 1885.
3. Ibid-P-116.

On being heard, the Maulana started beating the man with his stick without any interruption. The people present before him, thought that the man would face his end. But the man was calm and quiet and did not utter a single word nor did the man complain against beating. After that the Maulana went to his apartment. The man had his bath from the adjacent pond, awaiting the arrival of the Maulana at the waiting room. On the arrival of the Maulana, the man took leave for departure towards his city home, Chittagong, after conveying his proper respect to the Maulana. After three months, the man again came to the Maulana to pay his respect for un-expected recovery from an incurable disease ----leprosy.¹

(v). One more miracle of the Maulana is very important.² This miracle is a bye-word in Chittagong, and is current in the lips of everybody. Once the Maulana in his (جذب) Jadhb was performing ablution sitting beside the pond and all on a sudden the Maulana cried out saying "Stupid get out from here and throw away the water-pot which he was holding in his hand, in the pond, but till then he did not complete his ablution. In view of this circumstances, the Khādims (attendants) brought for him another water-pot in order to complete his ablution. Then the Maulana went to his Khānqah. Therefore, a vigorous search was made to pick up the thrown water-pot but of ^{no} avail. All the attendants became dejected for not getting the water-pot thrown to the pond. After two days, a man of Rangunia, Chittagong, 'Asmat' Ali, by name, appeared at the Darbar of the Maulana with a water-pot ³ along with some

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1. Ibid.
 2. Maulana Delwar Husain, Jibqni 'O' Karāmat, quoted from Aina-i-Bari, p. 138.
 3. The water-pot is still preserved in the majar and the devotees drink water from it.

hand made cakes. He presented the water-pot before the Maulana and started weeping. A few minutes after, the man came out from the Khānqah of the Maulānā and people out side the Khānqah curiously asked the man, where did he get the water pot ? The man started narrating the facts that he went to a nearby jungle for collecting wood to meet both ends meet and accordingly he collected some wood from a jungle of Kodala and while he was making those wood into bundles, a big tiger appeared before him and while he was about to be attacked, he cried out saying (يا غوث الاعظم). No sooner did he finish the word then a water-pot was thrown at the face of the tiger from the space, then the tiger fled away crying. After that I returned home with this water-pot along with the bundles of wood. That's why he brought the water-pot with him, because he knew at once that the water-pot belonged to his Murshid-----the Maulānā and through whose terrific power of miracle his life was saved from an imminent danger.

Here in we should like to record the observations of two great mystic personalities, on the dynamic forces of the Maulānā in mysticism.¹

(a). Hadrat Maulānā Walī Ahmad Nizāmpuri (R.A.) observes :

" তিনি গাউসুল আজম মাইয়্যে তাম্ভার উপর অগাধ ভক্তি ও বিশ্বাস রাখিতেন। কিন্ত গান, বাজনা বা পিছদায়ে তাহিয়া পরাসরি জায়েজ রাখিতেন না। তাঁহার এক ভক্ত শেখ মোস্লেহউদ্দীন, চট্টগ্রামস্থ ৫২নং নান্দা পাড়ায় বাস করিতেন। ১৯৫১ সালে মাঘ মাস মাইয়্যে তাম্ভার শরীফ হজরতের ওরস চালাকালীন রীতিনীতি সমুখে আনোচনার

1. Maulana Delwar Husain, Jibani 'O' Karamat, p.236

সময়ে মরহুম মাওলানা ওলী আহমদ সাহেব বলেন, 'মাটির উপর নাচ গান করিলে কি হইবে ? মাটির নীচে উত্তম জিনিষই আছে । হজরত মাওলানা সুফী আহমদ উল্লাহ (রঃ) চট্টগ্রামের একজন সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ বুজুর্গ ও আলেম ছিলেন । তিনি কঠিন শরীয়ত পন্থী (শরীয়তের মূল রহস্য অনুসারী ছিলেন) তাঁহার এমতকালের পর মাজার শরীফে কি হইতেছে উহার জন্য তিনি দায়ী নহেন ' ।

বর্ণনাকারী শেখ মোসলেহ উদ্দীন,
৫২নং নানা পাড়া, চট্টগ্রাম।

(b)। সাতকাবিয়া বিবাসী মাওলানা আবদুস সালাম বর্ণনা করেন যে, আমি দারুল উলুম মাদ্রাসার মোদাররেস জনাব মৌলানা বজির আহমদ সাহেবের ছাত্র। উক্ত মাদ্রাসায় পড়াকালে একদিন মাইজ ভাম্বুর শরীফের ভক্ত ও মুরাদদের আচরণ ও কার্যকলাপ দেখিয়া আমার বিশেষভাবে সন্দেহ হইল। ইহাতে আমি তাহাদের সমুখে বিশেষভাবে সমালোচনা করিলাম। মাওলানা বজির আহমদ সাহেব আমার প্রতি লক্ষ্য করিয়া বলিলেন, 'তুমি আমার কাছে আসো, আমি তাঁহার নিকটে গেলাম। তিনি আমাকে জিজ্ঞাসা করিলেন, তুমি কি মাইজ ভাম্বুরী তরীকা সমুখে কিছু বলিয়াছ? আমি সুীকার করিলাম হাঁ হুজুর আমি বলিয়াছি। তিনি আমাকে নির্দেশ দিলেন 'মিয়া কান 'পাক্‌ডো' 'তওবা করো'। আর কখন ও বলিবে না বলিয়া শপথ কর। আমি আদেশ পালনে তওবা করিলাম এবং এ প্রতিজ্ঞা করিলাম যে জীবনে আর কোন দিন মাইজ ভাম্বুরের বিরুদ্ধে সমালোচনা করিব না। পরে হুজুর আমাকে অতি আদরের সাথে একটি জপেটাঘাত করিয়া বলিলেন 'উহা একটি দরিয়া সাদুশ। দরিয়াতে কি না থাকে? কিন্তু দরিয়ার পানি কি কখন ও অপবিত্র হয়? বরং সর্বপ্রকার অপবিত্রতা দরিয়ার লোনা পানিতে মিশিয়া পবিত্র হইয়া যায়। আদব করি ও'।

His death :- This booming personality and mystic philosopher died at the age of 79 in A.D.1906(A.H.1313) at 1 a.m. Monday, the 27th of ^{Dh} ~~Sh~~ilqada and 10th of Magh. He left behind his only wife Saiyyidah

Lutfunnesa and a daughter Saiyyidah Anwarun Nesa. His only son died during his life time, leaving two grand sons-----Saiyyid Mir Hasan and Maulana Delwar Husain and a grand daughter Saiyyidah Saburun Nesa Bibi.¹

'Urs :- His 'Urs mubarak is celebrated every year on the 10th Magh, Bengali year. People from far and wide, irrespective of caste and creed assemble to his mazar with due solemnity to pay their homage on this day. People from all walks of life, with profound ovation and humbleness attend on Ziarat around the mazar of Maulana. Some recite verses from the holy Quran and others offer Fateha and Darud Sharif at the mazar. Again in many adjoining places Milad-i-Mahfil is also held in a separate way. But people of different sects and religions also plunge themselves into dance and music.

During the 'Urs' the entire area takes a festive look by erecting pandals and tents in order to accommodate people of different parts of the country in those pandals and tents. Those who attend the 'Urs' from the various parts bring with them goods and commodities to sell them in such assembly. The entire show is managed by the heirs of the Maulana in a befitting manner. Hundreds of volunteers take care of the devotees, those who come from far-flung areas of the country. A great feast is also held in honour of the 'Urs' of the Maulana. The devotees carry with them bullock, cow, goats even cock and hen etc. to pay their proper homage and respect to their Murshid and sacrifice these animals on that very day to feed the destitutes, beggars and

1. Maulana Delwar Husain, Jibani 'O' Karamat, p.217.
A list of his prominent Khalifahs and remarks about him by some foreigners are given in Appendix (A) and (B).

Faqirs and also to the guests. Both cash and kinds are also offered to the heirs of the Maulana as a token of love and reverence to the Maulana. At 12 mid night all sorts of dance and music are stopped and Milad Mahfil starts with Fateha Khānī and ends with (و) (i.e. those who attend the Milad Mahfil, all stand up at the end of Milad as a mark of respect to the Prophet). After that the volunteers distribute (Tabarruk) the meal to the different camps and tents in a disciplined way.

On the 13th of Magh the Qul Khānī is observed with pomp and grandeur. The monthly Fateha of the Maulānā is held on every 10th of Bengali Calendar. Besides, people from various corners of the country attend the shrine of the Maulānā for performing Ziārat and also to pay homage to this heraldic personality of home and abroad.

His Mazar:- The Mazar¹ (shrine) of this great saint is situated about 25 miles north of Chittagong city. There is also a Railway station a few miles away from the mazar. Now a days pucca road connects Maizbhandar and communication has become easier than before. The present communication facility has facilitated the people to attend the mazar of this great Sufi comfortably. Cars, baby taxi, rickshaw etc. ply on the road.

Maulānā Ahmad Allah's mazar is a pucca construction. The plinth of the mazar is of pedestral and the entire floor is of mosaic. There is a concrete ceiling over the mazar having a big dome over the shrine. Within a mazar, there is a small verandah for easier movements of visitors and devotees. A big pond is just adjacent to the mazar on

1. See plate VI(a).

the western side and at the eastern side of the mazar a mosque is built up for offering prayers. Just at the right side of the Maulana's mazar, the mazar of his nephew-----Shah Ghulam al-Rahman, the mighty soul and originator of the Maulawiya Tariqah is situated. The mazar of the Maulana is surrounded by the shrines of his son and grand sons of the Maulana. The visitors also pay their homage to those shrines and pay their homage to those shrines and pay their presentations in cash and kinds. The Khadims of different shrines collect those presentations respectively. Every day hundreds of people visit those shrines with utmost reverence and due solemnity.

2. Sayyid Ghulam al-Rahman Shah

(His birth) :- Hadrat Sayyid Ghulam al-Rahman, was born on Monday, 10th January 1865 A.D./12 Jamadi I, 1282 A.H. His father's name was Shah Abd al-Karim, the youngest brother of Maulana Shah Ahmad Allah, the originator of the Maizbhandari Tariqah. His mother's name was Saiyyadah Musharraf Jan, the daughter of Sayyid Qamar Chand of Shuabil, P.S. Fatik Chari, Chittagong. His Aqiqah ceremony was solemnised on the 7th day of his birth. On the same day Sayyid 'Abd al-Karim took his newly born baby to his eldest brother Maulana Shah Ahmad Allah for blessings. Maulana Shah Ahmad Allah took the baby on his lap and told as follows:-¹

”یہ بچہ باغ کا گل ہے - حضرت یوسف علیہ السلام کا چہرہ
اس میں آیات - اس کو عزیز رکھو۔“

Trans:- 'This is a rose of our garden; he has got the resemblance of the face of Hadrat Yusuf (peace be upon him). Take care of him'.

1. Sayyid Badar al-Duza, Hadrat Baba Bhandari, pp.18-19.

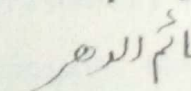
His primary education:- Sayyid 'Abd al-Karīm, the father of the baby, used to maintain a Furqānia madrasah in the vicinity of his house where the children of the village had their primary education, particularly in reading the Qurān and getting elementary education in the performance of religious duties. While the baby attained the age of primary education, his father 'Abd al-Karīm sent his son in his own Furqānia madrasah.¹ The teacher of the madrasah was learned and spiritually developed. One day in course of discussion regarding the baby the teacher indicated to his father about the bright future of the ^{boy} ~~baby~~. The ^{boy} ~~baby~~ received his first lesson from his uncle, Hadrat Shāh Ahmad Allāh on the holy Qurān. Thereafter the ^{boy} ~~baby~~ very often used to go to the madrasah but more often the baby passed his time with his uncle, Hadrat Shāh Ahmad Allāh. Due to his inborn ^{boy} ~~baby~~ genius, the ^{boy} ~~baby~~ finished his primary education with credit at the very nascent stage. But as the pecuniary condition of his father was not so sound, he had to share the burden ^{of} his father in most of the domestic affairs of the family, even while he was ^a mere ^a boy of 9 years. His main duty was to take away the cattle to the field and to look after them all day long. But his curious mind always remained with his uncle, Maulānā Ahmad Allāh.²

His higher studies:- At the age of 15 the young boy Saiyyid Ghulam al-Rahmān, who had an indomitable thirst for higher studies, came to the Chittagong city and got himself admitted to the then Muhsinia madrasah in A.H.1299/A.D.1881 and prosecuted his studies at a stretch in that madrasah for two years. The Muhsinia madrasah of Chittagong was a

1. Ibid., pp.21-23.

2. Sayyid Badar al-doza; Bābā Bhāndārī, pp.23ff.

government managed institution, staffed by many luminaries of the contemporary period. While a new madrasah was established in Bibirhat under P.S. Fatik Chari, Sayyid Ghulam al-Rahman, left the government madrasah in order to study at the madrasah near his home at the instance of Maulana Mubarak 'Ali and studied in that madrasah for three years and again came back to the Muhsinia madrasah and got himself lodged in the residence of Maulvi Ashraf 'Ali of Chandgaon, Chittagong. During his stay in this area, the nobility of his character, courtliness in dealings, politeness in discourse, honesty in purpose, simplicity, truthfulness, courage and boldness and above all his ascetic tendency made him prominent to his teachers as well as to the public.

During his stay in the Muhsinia madrasah, the Maulana was very much attentive to his lessons as well as to teach the children of his lodging master. Mostly it was observed, after performing his primary duty at the early part of the night, the rest of the night, he devoted himself to deep meditation in the neighbouring mosque called, Bahaddarhat mosque.¹ His lodging master, Ashraf 'Ali and his nephew Yar 'Ali, both of them had witnessed that during the last three years of his stay in their house, Maulana Shah Ghulam al-Rahman did never eat anything during the day time excepting on both the Eid days. This proves that the Maulana was a  i.e. he used to keep fasts throughout the year in his student life. It not only approves of his piety but also reflects the ascetic life at the very nascent stage.

His marriage:- While his parents found their son deeply devoted to piety,

1. The mosque still exists in the area of Chandgaon, P.S. Chandgaon, Dist. Chittagong.

who gave up all else for God's sake, renouncing^c pleasure, wealth and power, which are the general objects of human ambition, they (the parents) decided finally to arrest their son in marriage. With this end in view, on the 27th of Falgun, A.H.1307/A.D.1889 they gave their son in marriage with Saiyyidah Zebunnesa, the 1st daughter of Saiyyid Ashraf 'Ali al-Husaini¹ while Maulānā Ghulām al-Rahmān was a student of 1st year Fādil class. But the marriage could neither attract him nor deviate him from ascetic devotion. As a result, all his family members became despaired of his such attitude. After the marriage, seeking permission from his uncle, Maulānā Ahmad Allāh, he went to the city and deeply engaged himself in studies as the madrasah Final Examination was drawing near. Though occasionally he used to come home, most of the time, he was found sitting before his uncle (Maulānā Ahmad Allāh) his Murshid (Pir). He was quite unconcerned with worldly life, but to remain beside his Pir (Maulānā Ahmad Allāh) was the aim of his life.

At the age of 25, he was the candidate for the final year Fādil Examination and the day before the Examination, he came home for blessings from his parents and his uncle/^{and Pir.} (Pir). Though his parents as well as his relations were very much keenly awaiting his success in the Examination, ^{concern for} but his uncle did not show any sort of indication to his higher studies, rather he said that 'he had already appeared in the Examination'. But no body understood the ^Lallegorical version of Maulānā Ahmad Allāh on the matter. After obtaining the ^Lallegorical permission from his Murshid, Maulānā Ghulām al-Rahmān appeared at the Examination

1. Al-Haj Saiyyad Ashraf Ali al-Husaini, the father-in-law of Sayyid Ghulām al-Rahmān was the descendant of Saiyyad Qamar Chand of Shuabil, P.S. Fatik Chari, district Chittagong. Moreover, Sayyadah Zebunnesa was the maternal-sister of Sayyad Ghulām al-Rahmān, (Badar al-Durra: Hadrat Baba Bhandari, p.26) so the father-in-law of Sayyad Ghulām al-Rahmān should not be confused with his lodging master Ashraf Ali.

and was doing well in each paper but on the third day of the Examination, Maulānā Ghulām al-Rahmān was found in the Examination Hall abit abnormal, most of his teachers thought that he fell ill; he threw away the pen, ink-pot and his scripts and started reciting Ghazal (غزل) mystic poems in the examination Hall. On the other hand, Maulānā Ahmad Allāh called for the eldest brother of Sayyid Ghulām al-Rahmān and said to him " মিঃ আমি হজে ষাইতে চাই, আমার সারাটি বাগান খুঁজিয়া কোথাও একটি গোলাপ ফুল পাইলাম না " ¹

Tran:- 'O, my son, I would like to perform Haj, but I could not see a single rose in my garden'. Understanding the inner sense of this mysterious version of the Maulānā (Ahmad Allāh) the eldest brother of Sayyid Ghulām al-Rahmān sought permission from the Maulānā to call back his middle brother Sayyid Ghulām al-Rahmān from the city where he was appearing at his examination, At this the Maulānā said 'It will be wise to bring him here'.

In the meantime, ^{finding} to see the severity of the ^{abnormal} condition of Maulānā Ghulām al-Rahmān, his teachers sent him to his village home Fatik Chari along with his class mates Maulvī Abd al-Hakīm and Maulvī Abd al-Azīz. On arrival at his residence, he (Maulānā Ghulām al-Rahmān) was brought to Maulānā Ahmad Allāh, who gave him a glass of water to drink; thereafter he regained his sense and came to a normal position.

After drinking water, he recited the following verses in mixed Arabic and Persian languages:-²

(১) ایها القوم الذی فی المدرسه + کما حصلتموه الوسوسه
(۲) حد کتابون کادرقها در تارکن + ررے خود را جانب در تارکن

1. Sayyid Badar al-Duza, Hadrat Bābā Bhandari, pp.28-29.
2. Sayyid Badar al-Duza, Bābā Bhandari, p.30.

Ibid.

Trans:- (1). 'O, the students of the madrasah, whatever you have learnt (in it), all are riddles'.

(2). 'Cast all the books and letters into the fire, cast your face towards your beloved'. When Maulānā ^{Ghulām al-Rahmān} attained normalcy, Maulānā Shāh Ahmad Allāh presented him with his own cloak and blessed him with Khilāfat.

From now onward, Maulānā Ghulām al-Rahmān became more perceptible towards mysticism and continued in his ascetic life. He made raving efforts day and night in Maraqabah and Mushāhidah to know the mysteries of Allah; not only that, in order to achieve its ends, Maulānā Ghulām al-Rahmān undertook various journeys in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and in the adjoining hilly areas of Diyang ~~area~~ and Sitakunda. During this journey he had a lungi that he put on and a wrapper ^{with which} that he wrapped his body. During this horrific journey, one of his devotees, Munshī Nethār Ahmad was with the Maulānā¹ and experienced some miraculous incidents in that journey. Various stories of his miracles are collected by his biographer Sayyid Badar al-doza, of which some are as follows:-

(a). Once in the deep forest while he was passing through the darkness, Munshī Nethār Ahmad cried out out of fear and appealed to the Maulānā to stop and to take rest in such darkness; the Maulānā did not give any air ~~heed~~ to it and went on as fast as he could; then the Munshī Shāhib again cried out and begged of him not to proceed but all on a sudden he saw a flash of light on their way. In that condition he found that the Maulānā plucked some fruits of poisonous type and gave it to Munshī Nethār Ahmad to eat; he, the Munshī, out of his severe hunger ate the same to the best of his satisfaction. In the morning the Maulānā after saying his

1. Sayyid Badar al-Duza, Bābā Bhandārī, pp.60-61.

prayer again went on, neither the scorching-heat, nor the shower of rain could stand on his way. After fifteen days and nights the Maulānā came to his residence but during this period he himself ate nothing. Munshi Nethar Ahmed said that once during such journey many ferocious animals like tiger, elephants and snakes and dogs appeared before them but did not touch the Maulānā, rather all surrendered to him and paved his way to move on.¹ (b). Once in the Hill tracts of Chittagong while the Maulānā, according to his routine work, was passing through a deep forest at night a band of Jummu¹ saw the Maulānā and became astonished to see his enlightened face. After a few minutes they came with some fruits and presented to the Maulānā; the Maulānā took a few and distributed the other amongst them. The Jummu were eagerly looking at him, and at this moment a song was on the air, but ^{none} one of them saw who was singing the song. This is as follows:^{2,3}

ভান্ডারী ভান্ডারী বলে গ্রন ত্যাগিব ।

পাহাড় পর্বত বন একে একে ত্যাজিব ।

Tran:- 'Saying Bhandari, bhandari, we shall sacrifice our lives, We shall search him in mountains, hills and jungles one after another'. In this way the Maulānā animated himself in asceticism for twelve years with utmost devotion but when he returned from his ^{perilous} ascetic journey, his

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1. Jummu is a kind of hill tribe, those who live in the dense hilly areas. They earn their livelihood by cutting wood, bamboos and also by doing agriculture.
 2. Ibid., p.
 3. Sayyid Badar al-Duza, Baba Bhandari, p.70.

Murshid (i.e. Maulānā Ahmad Allāh) was no more in the world.

At the age of forty Maulānā Ghulām al-Rahmān ^hinterited the seat of his Murshid (Pir) Maulānā Ahmad Allāh, the originator of the Maizbhandāri Tariqah. But Maulānā Ghulām al-Rahmān propagated and established the Maulawiyah Tariqah ^{as} discussed before. The originator of the Tariqah ^{was} Maulānā Jalāl al-dīn Rūmī, the author of the famous Mathnavī. It is said that the ~~kikk~~ ^{little} Maulvī was given ^{to him} by his father. From this the Tariqah founded by him is known as Maulviyah ^{ah} Tariqah. In this Tariqah the devotees take recourse to Sima and Raqs (Music and dancing).¹

His miracles:- Amongst his numerous miracles a few is stated below.²

(a). Maulānā Hāfez Shaikh Farid al-Zamān of Satkania, Chittagong was a pious man. He narrated that he was suffering from extreme poverty and on the score of which he sold out most of the ornaments of his life and even utensils of his house and finally his entire family members started starving. One day he complained to the Maulānā about the course of his poverty. On this complaint the Maulānā asked him to go to Rangoon. Accordingly, Maulānā Farid al-Zamān ^{started} ^{on} set for Rangūn by Steamer. While the steamer anchored at the Basin Poart, Maulānā Farid was taking his bath in a tub; all on a sudden Maulānā Farid fell down in the ^{sea} ~~river~~ along with the tub. The ~~river~~ ^{sea} was stormy, Maulānā Farid was about to die under the waves. At this critical juncture, he remembered his Murshid (i.e. Maulānā Ghulām al-Rahmān) to have the

1. H.R.R. Gibb and J.H. Kramers: Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, pp. 363-364.

2. Sayyid Badr al-Boza, Bābā Bhāndārī, pp. 105-123.

blessings of Allah. Instantaneously a piece of stone reached his legs and ^{he} saw his Murshid (i.e. Maulāna Ghulam al-Rahman) before him. The steamer in which he was on board, went away by about a mile. The captain of the ship was informed of the mishap who at once sent a rescue boat to bring him back. Ultimately he was rescued and brought back to the ship. After witnessing the miracle, the boarders of the ship became convinced that the man might have been a saint. Therefore, the boarders of the ship gave him money and sought blessings from him instead. After collection it was found that he got 800/- (eight hundred) rupees from the boarders of the ship. Moreover, after getting down from the steamer, five hundred rupees more were given to him by the boarders. The Managing Director of the Bengal Steamer Company, Mr. Abd al-Bari¹ made arrangement for his accommodation in his own rest house. On the next day he (Maulāna Farid) sent Taka 800/- through money order to his family. A few days after his stay at Rangoon, Maulāna Farid came back home with rest of the money and attended his Murshid to pay his homage and in this way he got rid of his poverty.

(b). One Nazir Ahmad Shiqdar of Banskhal Police Station, village Matar Bari, Chittagong was a supplier of paddy to the British government during the Second World War. Once it so happened that he loaded eight

1. He was a philanthropist, was originally an inhabitant of Fatikchari Upazila but passed the greater part of his life in business in Rangoon. During the second world war, when Burma was occupied by the Japanese, he returned to Chittagong, and stayed for sometime in the Chawkbazar area of Chittagong. The great industrialist of Chittagong Mr. A.K. Khan is his son in law.

hundred maunds of paddy in a large boat and set ^{sail} for Chittagong. While the boat crossed the Qutubdia island, within a few minutes the boat fell victim to cyclone and within twinkling of an eye, the boat capsized in the bay of Bengal. But no body knew what was the fate of the boat men; Nazir Ahmad was struggling in the water of the sea, and when he became sure of his death, he prayed to Almighty Allah through the media of his Pir for his rescue. What a miracle it ^{was!} he saw his Murshid at once, dragging him towards the bank. That very moment an unknown boatman got him into his boat and his Murshid was found no more.

(c). One Maulānā Abd al-Wadūd of Amirabad, of Satkania Upazila, Chittagong, narrated that while he was a student of Muradabad Madrasah in India in 1932 A.D. and was studying Hadith literature, and when his final examination came very near, he went to Maulānā Fadl al-Rahmān for blessings. There he saw a man of Bangladesh, Maulvī Abd al-Jalīl by name, who was the Maulānā's attendant. Therefore, he transmitted his desired ^{to the Maulānā} him through that man. On this prayer the Maulānā said

"تمہاری نعمت رحمان کے پاس ہے"

(i.e. your desired goal rests with Rahmān, Maulānā Ghulam al-Rahmān). On this, he (Abd al-Wadūd) asked the Maulānā Fadl al-Rahmān, 'Hadrat, have you got intimacy with him (i.e. Maulānā Ghulam al-Rahmān)'. The Maulānā (Fadl al-Rahmān) said:

"ہاں بیان روحانیت میں ان سے سلوات ہے"

(i.e. yes, I have got intimacy with

him through celestial source). He transmitted the remarks of Maulānā Fadl al-Rahmān while he met Maulānā Ghulam al-Rahmān after his arrival in Chittagong.

(d). A man from Mymensingh, Yūsuf 'Alī Master by name, stated that during the First World War he was a soldier under the British Government. Once at mid-day they were sleeping in a trench just to avoid themselves from the German attack. There he dreamt that his Murshid (Maulānā Ghulām al-Rahmān) said to him 'O, Yūsuf rise up and go to the second story of the building, within a few minutes the Germans will throw bomb over here'. He woke up and went to the upper story of the building and a few minutes later, the Germans bombed over the trenches and hence the rest of his colleagues lost their lives in that bombardment.

His death:- This great saint died at the age of 71 in A.D.1937 on the 5th of April.¹ Thousands of people attended to his Zanaja(Funeral) prayer from far flung areas of Chittagong. His Namaj-i-Zanaja was led by his middle son Sayyid Abūl Bashār at the instance of his elder brother. The Maulānā left behind four sons and two daughters. The names are stated below:-

1. Sayyid Khair al-Bashār.
2. Sayyid Abūl Bashār.
3. Sayyid Mahbub al-Bashār.
4. Sayyid Shafi al-Bashār.
5. Sayyid^{ah} Maimuna Khatūn,
6. Sayyid^{ah} Sajedah Khatūn.

Urs :- The Urs mubārak of this saint is held every year in a befitting manner on the 22nd Chaitra of the Bengali year. People from all corners of the country attend the Urs ceremony with great enthusiasm to pay their homage. Largest number of people assemble here in recognition of his sky-high position in the field of asceticism. During the Urs, people of different parts live in the tents and under different

1. Sayyid Badar al-Duza, Baba Bhandari, pp.159-162.

pandals and remain busy in Dhikr, Mahfil-i-Milād. A kind of Sima is also held with stereo-typed musical instruments within the mazar. Many animals are sacrificed to mark the day in a pompous way.

Tabarruk is distributed amongst all; poor and destitutes are also fed during the Urs.

His Khalifas:- A good number of Khalifas are found in the list but due to the short space it is not possible to mention the names of all his Khalifas. Therefore, a few prominent names are given below:-

1. Maulāna Wasi al-Rahmān, Chittagong.
2. Maulāna Amin al-Haq Harbangiri, Chittagong.
3. Maulāna Farid al-Zamān, Satkania, Chittagong.
4. Maulāna Wali Allāh, Comilla.
5. Hafez Nazir Ahmad, Pathantuly, Chittagong.
6. Maulāna Siraj al-Haq, Nayapara, Noakhali.
7. Maulāna Abd al-Subhān Faqir, Mymensingh.
8. Maulāna Ismāil Talukdar, Barisal.
9. Bashir al-din Faqir, Rangpur.
10. Arab Ali Talukdar, Khulna.
11. Muhammad Husain, Dhaka.
12. Ghulam Mustafa, Noakhali.

His shrine :- The Dargah¹ of the Maulāna is situated on the same area as that of his Murshid Hadrat Maulāna Ahmad Allāh (R.A.) The shrine is a pucca structure, beautifully decorated by a big dome. The plinth of the mazar is fully of mosaic. Hundreds of people from different parts of the country attend the shrine of the saint to offer Fateha. He is considered to be the most prominent amongst the Khalifas of the originator of the Māiz-bhāndārī Tāriqa, Maulāna Shāh Ahmad Allāh (R.A.).

1. See plate VI, (B).

3. Hadrat Maulānā Abd al-Latīf (R.A.)

Early life:- Maulānā Abd al-Latīf is one of the eminent saints of the 20th century in Chittagong. He was born in A.H.1281/A.D.1862, B.S.1268 in the Bengali month Bhādra.¹ He belonged to a middle class Taluqdar family of Mirsarai. His father 'Alīm al-dīn was a prominent lawyer of the then Mirsarai Civil court who earned reputation and prominence by dint of affluence and intellect in the society. Maulānā Abd al-Latīf was very much fortunate to have his birth in the womb of Monijan who was a niece of another famous saint of Chittagong, Sūfī Nūr Muḥammad(R.A.)². At the age of 5, Abd al-Latīf was sent to a local Maktab and within a short time he became proficient in Ilm-i-Taswīd, reading the holy Qurān correctly and primary books on Arabic and Persians. After the completion of Primary education at the local maktab, he received further education at a nearby Madrasah, established by a renowned Khalifa of Sūfī Nūr Muḥammad (R.A.), Maulānā Muḥammad Akram 'Alī who was known as {Bodo Maulvi}. After studying a few years in that Madrasah, he proceeded to receive higher education from the then Muḥsinia-madrasah in the Chittagong city and got himself admitted in the fifth class and proved himself to be a meritorious student in the class and earned reputation amongst his teachers. But later he left the institution and finally made up his mind to proceed to Calcutta 'Alia madrasah with the consent of his father. But though admitted, he could not continue his studies due to sudden attack of small pox.³ As a result he had to come back and continue his studies in the Muḥsinia madrasah again with broken heart.⁴ After one year,

1. Sayyid 'Alī 'Azām, Latīf Charit, pp.1-2.

2. Ibid, p.2.

3. Ibid, p.4.

4. Ibid, p.4.

he again left for Calcutta with a firm determination to reach his cherished goal.¹ On the score of his unchallenged scholarship and merit, he was crowned with a gold medal in the Fāḍil Examination and such a brilliant result chanced him to be a teacher of Calcutta 'Āliya madrasah for some time.² Afterwards he came back to his home district, Chittagong and engaged himself as a temporary teacher in the then Muhsinia Madrasah, Chittagong.³ In order to meet his further thirst for higher studies, the Maulānā left for India to attain proficiency in different subjects namely Ḥadīth, Tafsīr, Fiqh and Philosophy and became the student of the then India's versatile genius Ḥadrat Rashīd Ahmad Gangūhī (R.A.).⁴ Thereafter, on the advice of Rashīd Ahmad Gangūhī (R.A.) the Maulānā entered the India's singularly famous institution-----Deoband⁵- madrasah where the Maulānā passed a pretty long time to gain knowledge in all branches. He attained so much proficiency that he was endowed with the title of 'Maulānā'.⁶

Establishment of madrasah:- After his return from Deoband, he established a madrasah and after a few years while Mirsarai madrasah was founded, the Maulānā closed down his own madrasah and did his best for the development of the other. This shows that the Maulānā was a real patriot and was not narrow minded. After the establishment of the madrasah, he undertook journey to different places for preaching religion and taking part in national issues.

1. Ibid, p.4.

2. Ibid, p.5

3. Muhsinia madrasah was established in A.D.1874 and recently it is named as Muhsin College.

4. Rashīd Ahmad Gangūhī was at home in Fiqh literature, he is considered to be the second Abū-Hanīfa till to-day. He was also the patron in chief of the Deoband Madrasah.

5. Deoband is a capital religious Institution of India in U.P.

6. Sayyid 'Alī Azam : Latīf Charit, p.9.

Confirmation of Khilāfat:- The Maulānā received his spiritual teachings from three contemporary notable sufīs:- (a). At first from late Maulānā Muḥammad Akram 'Alī of Nizampur, (b). Secondly from late Maulānā Ḥāfeẓ Aḥmad Jaunpurī the noteworthy son of Maulānā Karāmat 'Alī Jaunpurī (R.A.) and (c). thirdly/^{from} the celebrated Pir of India Maulānā Qādī Ismā'īl Maulayurī.¹

Propagation of Islamic values:- His motto was to propagate Islamic teachings based on the Qur'ān and Sunnah, giving up bid'at or innovations that crept up into the then Muslim-society. Fearless and selfless, Maulānā 'Abd al-Latīf shone as a great spiritual luminary in Chittagong. As a preacher he would never attack others' religious beliefs. By his piety he endeared himself to large number of people irrespective of community and caste. His strength of character attracted many people towards him. He delivered speeches in different religious Conferences where he was always found criticising vehemently against bid'at (innovations) and shirk (Association with Allah) and inviting the Muslims towards Islamic ways of life and alerted the people against Qādiyānī group.

His legal opinions on some religious problems:- He combined in himself the role of a teacher, Muftī, a social reformer and a great saint. He came in long arguments (جس) with the then Advocate of Qādiyānī creed in the then Bengal, Sayyid 'Abd al-Wāḥed who was a Qādī also, a man of Brahmanbaria. A date was fixed to invite the people to listen to the discourses from both. But the repeated requests and letters of the Maulānā could not bring the man (Sayyid 'Abd al-Wāḥed) before the

1. Sayyid 'Alī 'Azam : Latīf Charit, p.10

public, then the Maulānā finding no other alternative wrote a Fatwa and announced before the public that the aforesaid man is not a Muslim.¹

The Maulana became very much anxious and worried to see the pitiable conditions of the then Muslim Society. During the time of the Britishers, eighty percent of the Muslims were under the exploitation of the non-Muslims, fell victim owing to poverty and used to ^{mortgage} lead their ornaments (gold and silver) and even their furniture to the non-Muslims Mahājans. They also, due to the curse of poverty, never used to hesitate to ^{mortgage} lead their ancestral abode to the Mahājans and in default these Mahājans used to grab the valuables on nominal price at the time of decree. This system had made most of the Muslims street-beggars. Such a miserable and pitiable conditions of the Muslim Society wounded the noble heart of the Maulānā ^{who} he felt deeply about it. In finding a solution to the problem, the Maulānā made exhaustive studies on the holy Qur'an, Hadīth and Fiqh and in the long run, he published two Fatwas (legal opinions) on the aforesaid issues.

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1. In this connection, my late lamented father Qārī Maulānā Muḥammad Sulaimān, who was a teacher and was one of the founders of Madrasah-i-'Alīa, Dār al-'Ulūm, Chandanpura, Chittagong, wrote a book against Qadiyani group declaring them as non-Muslims. The book was entitled

The book was written in the year 1940. The book was written in Arabic, contained fatwa or legal opinion on the subject from religious luminaries of undivided India and Saudi Arabia namely Maulana Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Baghdādī, Pesh Imām, Anderkilla Jāmē masjid, Maulānā Abūl Kalām Azād, Maulānā Ḥusain Ahmad al-Madani (R.A.) and many others. While I was a student of Fādil class in 1953 of the said madrasah, he advised me to publish the book in Bengali and in Bengali and in English languages. Unfortunately, the book was lost but the search is still going on.

The subject matter of these two Fatwas are :- The Muslims, due to extreme poverty, ^{were} ~~was~~ compelled to mortgage their ornaments, gold, silver and even their utensils to the non-Muslims on a fixed term and failing to repay the loan with interest, these valuables were decreed on a nominal price and this is called (کف رهن) (بیع مارنہ). In the fatwas, the Maulana, vehemently opposed the system and brought home to the Muslims that this was prohibited in Islam. His attempt was to acquaint the people with the Islamic law, though it was not possible for him to ameliorate the distress of the people. His fatwas, however, drew the attention of the Muslim leaders towards the ^{sins} ~~hids~~ of the system. A most interesting Fatwa was also written by the Maulana on ' (Band-i-Mataram). In September A.D.1920, the Annual session of the All India National Congress was held in Calcutta, where a renowned leader of the Punjab, Lalalajpat presided and in that Conference the resolution on non-co-operation movement was passed. After this Conference both Muslims and Hindus politically became united. On the other hand the Hindus also joined in the meeting of Khilafat movement. Both Hindus and Muslims started (স্বাধীন আন্দোলন) Swaraaj Andolan, just to make the whole of India free from the British rule and in this movement both Hindus and Muslims went on hand in hand raising slogans Allahu Akbar (الله أكبر) by the Muslims and Band-i-Mataram by the Hindus. Then a problem arose in the minds of the Muslims whether the Muslims could raise the slogan of Band-i-Mataram. In that Conference many prominent Ulama were present from all parts of India including the then Bengal.

At first, the prominent Maulānā Wazī Allāh of Sandwip gave his verdict in favour of the legality of the slogan, Band-i-Mataram by the Muslims. In the meantime Maulānā Abd al-Latīf prepared a Fatwa in a lucid Urdu language that the utterance of Band-i-Mataram by the Muslims is not unlawful. He also legalised the Shapla ^{or} the Shankush fish which were formerly considered to be forbidden by the Muslims.¹ His another interesting opinion was on accepting alms (عسرات). He decided the issue on the basis of the holy Qurān and the traditions of the Prophet. The 'Ulamā who passed from the Deoband Madrasah, did not consider it lawful to accept alms² after offering funeral prayer, conducting Milād-i-Mahfil etc. The Maulānā vehemently opposed the idea and declared such notion is illegal and void, illogical and improper. He argued that Islam did never prohibit to spend cash or kinds for the salvation (موت) of the dead rather encouraged to spend as much as possible. He also proved that by such expenditure, a dead man not only gets solace but also gets rid of his (dead) past sins. With this end in view, the Maulānā in order to popularise the idea wrote a Fatwa on this issue entitled ترقی البصائر فی خیرات الجنائز " والبصائر " -

1. The above problems were solved according to Shari'ah and proved them Halāl (legal) according to the Hanafi laws. Another issue is his legalising the delivery of weekly sermon on Friday prayer (جُمُعہ) in respective mother tongues. Further he obtained opinions from the prominent 'Ulamā of Bengal and India and had their consent on the issue. In A.D. 1922 this Fatwa was translated into English and was published in the form of a book named (Insha'at-i-Talim).
2. Actually this is a remuneration received by the 'Ulamā in exchange of doing some socio-religious functions, like conducting/prayer, milād-Mahfil, fātiha etc. In Chittagong this is called Khairat which is literally translated as alms.

Social works :- He also founded a senior Madrasah which still exists and which goes by his name Latifia madrasah. It is still serving the Muslim society, through it the Muslim students are receiving higher education in Islamic sciences. This madrasah is still giving tremendous services in religious and spiritual education. The Maulānā was personally found taking classes and appointed reputed scholars as teachers of the madrasah. Another madrasah was also established by the Maulānā at Tippera (India), near the village, Chapatali, which also goes by his name, Chapatali Latifia madrasah. The madrasah is well organised and is till now imparting religious education towards a good number of students by the eminent and proficient teachers.

The Maulānā was always found vigilant to upgrade the standard of education by appointing worthy teachers. In order to improve the financial condition of the madrasahs he established, he erected a permanent buildings, and to provide the students as tutors, the Maulānā arranged ^helters for those students in the houses of the well-to-do men of the ^earea. This actually proved the Maulānā's sincerity of purpose and unquestionable regards for religious education.

By dint of his born sagacity and religious personality he established Eidgah at Jafrabad village, where a huge gathering of people used to assemble including the Ulama and learned people. The Maulānā in that vast gathering, offered sermons which had educative value and made the people know the significance of the Eid congregation.

Library :- One more significant task of the Maulānā was his establishment of a library in which there are good collection of numerous books and journals of religious sciences.

His publications:- The Maulānā established a record and an incentive for the future scholars, by writing some books in Persian, Urdu and Arabic languages which also prove the depth of his knowledge. The names of the books are stated below:-

(1). Fatawa-i-Latifia (فتاویٰ لطیفہ) It is a collections of legal opinions on different problems prevailing in the then Muslim society.

(2). Efadat al-Tullab (انوار الطالب) Some written admonitions are embodied in the book for the students.

(3). Wazā'ef-i-Latifia (وظائف لطیفہ). This book is written for his followers (مطالعین لطیفہ), to get them acquainted with the rules of Tariqat.

(4). Khutbat-i-Latifia (خطبات لطیفہ). It is a collection of sermons of the Maulānā delivered on different occasions at different times.

(5). Muzarrebāt-i-Latifia (مجزرات لطیفہ). This book contains (تقویر) amulet etc.

(6). Mawed-i-Latifi (موعد لطیف). It is an anthology of Persian poetry---Urfi, (عرفی).

Death of his wife :- The death of his (Maulānā) wife Rābi'a Khātun in A.D.1930 corresponding to A.H.1350 made him gloomy and shaky. Even then he did never deviate an inch in preaching ideals of Islam within and

outside Bengal. After nine years of his wife's death, this great Maulānā, Sūfī and saint of Chittagong died in A.D.1939 corresponding to A.H. 1359 on the 16th of Dhil Hāj . The Maulānā left six sons and two daughters.

Urs:- In memory of the Maulānā, an annual Urs or death anniversary is held in the first week of the Bengali month 'Māgh'. This anniversary takes a festive look and a large number of people attend the Urs from different parts of the country and even outside the country. Hence his reputation as a preacher, a guide of his tariqah and above all his revivalist reforms in social and religious aspects need no explanation.

His disciples:- The Maulānā had a good number of disciples (مريدان) in and outside Bengal. More respected among them are:- Late Maulvī Mujīb al-Rahmān, ex-Magistrate, late Al-Hāj Nūr al-Absār Choudhury, Mr. Mahfuzul-Haq, Ex-Central minister and late M.L.A. Khān Bahādur Fazlul Qader etc. All of his (Maulānā) sons, in order of merit, are imparting spiritual preachings amongst his followers till now.

His Tariqah:- The Maulānā followed the four Principal Tariqahs viz. Chishtiya, Qādiriyyah, Naqshbandia and Muḡaddedia. He composed a treatise entitled Wazāif-i-Latīfia to make the principles of Dhikr-Adhkār easier for his disciples.¹

Mazar :- His mazar² is located just near his house. It is a pucca structure with ceiling having boundary wall. People from different parts pay Ziārat every day to the shrine of the Maulānā.

1. Sayyid Ali Āzam :- Latīf Charit, pp.29-30.

2. See Plate, VII (a).

4. Hadrat Damir al-din (R.A.)

Maulāna Damir al-din (R.A.) was a vastly learned manⁱⁿ Islamic religious sciences. It is said that his fore-fathers migrated either from Calcutta or from Delhi¹ and settled in the northern side of Chittagong at village Shuabill, P.S. Fatik Chari, district Chittagong. His name is Damir al-din bin Nur al-din bin Torab al-din bin Waliz Mir. His father was so pious and God fearing that people called him Nur al-din Wali. Damir al-din was born in 1296 A.H./A.D. 1878 and he lost his father at a very early age. His elder brother was also then a mere boy receiving education in the Madrasah. So, the family was passing through extreme financial hardships.

Damir al-din also started his studies in a village Maktab, but when still very young, Damir al-din left for Burma to earn his livelihood and particularly to bear the educational expenses of his elder brother. In those days the fertile soil of Burma, particularly the commercially important city of Rangoon attracted a large number of fortune-seekers from the Indian sub-continent. Chittagong, being contiguous to Burma, supplied the major portions of these Indian fortune-seekers. As Burma was a land of matriarchal society, men were averse to hard works, the Indians supplied the manpower needed in agriculture, trade and industries in Burma. The boy Damir al-din also journeyed to Burma with the purpose of earning fortune. At the time of his journey, he studied only the holy Qur'an. After a few days of his stay at Burma, the boy Damir managed to get a service in a factory and with this meagre income he began to maintain himself and his family.

1. Hafiz Faiz Ahmad : Tadhkira-i-Damir, p.19.

The lion share of his income was spent on the educational expenses of his elder brother Maulānā - Samī' al-dīn and that was actually the aim of his journey to Burma.

After a few years, Maulānā's elder brother, Samī' al-dīn suddenly reached Burma owing to some domestic problems. This had actually made the boy Damīr more gloomy because he had gone all the way to Burma to defray the educational expenses of his elder brother. But now his elder brother had given up his studies and came to Burma. During his off time, the Maulānā used to study at night under the care of an Imām, who was popularly known as a Punjābī Imām in a nearby mosque in Burma. He completed the book Rāh-i-Majāz under the Imām.¹

During his stay at Burma, the Maulānā was indicated thrice through dreams to pursue spiritual knowledge which will elavate his position to the pinnacle of glory in the galaxy of Spiritualists and confer upon him the position of Wilāyat. Once the Maulānā narrated his dreams to the Punjābī Imām and requested to explain to him the significance of his dreams. In pursuance of his request, the Imām, of the mosque said to the Maulānā that the appearance of Hadrat Abū Hanīfa (R.A.) before you in dream and also your climbing up at the top of the tree bag no description of your gradual development in the field of ascetic as well as in the field of Sharīfah. Therefore, the Imām asked the Maulānā to go without any delay, to Ganguh and to obtain the blessings of Hadrat Rashīd Ahmad (R.A.). Damīr al-dīn became impressed at the interpretation of the Imām and intended to visit Ganguh, but

1. Author of the book is Hadrat Muhammad Ali, pub. in India. The book is used as a text book in the Ibtadayi madrasah. It is a book on Fiqh.

the pecuniary circumstances stood on his way. But he was determined to meet Shaikh Rashīd and undaunted by poverty, he left Burma and started for Ganguh to meet Rashīd Ahmad Ganguhi (R.A.). On his arrival at Ganguh he met Rashīd Ahmad Ganguhi but it was of no avail, because he was advised first to acquire the knowledge of Shari'ah and also to mend outward show and to meet him afterwards, because without having knowledge in Shari'ah it was impossible to obtain spiritual knowledge. On the advice of his teacher (Pir) Rashīd Ahmad Ganguhi, the Maulānā got himself admitted into the Deoband madrasah and he met one old student who came from his area, who helped him in various ways.

His higher education at Deoband :- The old student asked the Maulānā whether he would be able to defray the expenses of his daily needs. On this question the Maulānā replied "I have come here to learn and not to spend, for my daily meal, the water of the well is enough"¹. However, the Principal of the madrasah agreed to defray his entire expenses until he completes his courses of studies. Within six years of his entrance in the madrasah, he (the Maulānā) made a credit by finishing his primary education. During his student life the Maulānā received his specialised education in Fiqh literature from the then Mufti (Legal adviser) of Deoband 'Azīz al-Rahmān and in his recess period the Maulānā gathered his proficiency from the Abū Hanīfa of the time, Rashīd Ahmad Ganguhi,² and was attached to him to attain experiences on the subject. It seems that

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1. The name of the well is Moulsuri; the water of the well is considered to be holy as it is said that the well was dug up on the instruction of Prophet(S) during the construction of the Madrasah and still the pupils and teachers use and drink its water but the water of the well neither increases nor decreases even an inch. This is one of the miracles which still exists. I also personally drank its water on my visit to the Madrasah.
 2. Rashid Ahmad Ganguhi was called Abū Hanīfa of the time because of his fame and command over the subject as an specialist on Fiqh literature.

the Maulānā, while he was in the Deoband madrasah, gathered specialised knowledge from two experts namely, 'Azīz^{ul}-Rahmān and Rashīd Ahmad Ganguhī. Thus Damīr al-dīn was fortunate enough to attain proficiency in the Fiqh literature from those two scholars.

His ascetic knowledge :- After completing his studies at Deoband, Maulānā Damīr again left Deoband for Ganguh to quench his spiritual thirst. After his arrival there, he took his Baiyat (oath of fealty) from Rashīd Ahmad Ganguhī (R.A.) whose exemplary conduct had the greatest spiritual and moral effect upon Maulānā Damīr al-dīn. The Maulānā stayed at Ganguh for three years in the Company of the great teacher Rashīd Ahmad Ganguhī, and the latter very much influenced the life and thought of his pupil. His Pir found him to be an ideal murīd who received perfect knowledge both in esoteric and exoteric sciences and thus conferred upon him the Khilāf. Maulānā Damīr al-dīn, now a great Faqīh and a spiritual teacher, returned to his home land Chittagong with the Khilāfat nāmāh of Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad of Ganguh.

His active life :- It may be inferred from the above discussion that the Maulānā returned home as poor as before, but there was a great difference between his leaving home and returning; because he returned-- a vastly learned man in Islamic sciences. So, first he accepted a teaching job at Bibirhat madrasah at Fatik Charī Upa Zilla. But soon he met opposition from the orthodox section of the people. In Chittagong the Deobandi scholars are called Wahhābis, because they put emphasis on the Qur'ān and Sunnah and discard all rituals and ceremonies out-side the principles of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah as bid'at. So the orthodox section who were addicted to all age-old traditional rituals, not strictly

conforming to the Qur'an and Sunnah, but which they found necessary to keep the credulous masses together, did not like the puritanic principles of Maulānā Damīr al-dīn and dubbed him as Wahhābī. So, in the face of great opposition, he had to leave the Madrasah. His poverty reached to such an extent that sometimes he had to go unfed, but he did not stretch out his hands to others but completely surrendered to the will of God. He was till then a bachelor and he sought permission from his Pīr not to get married due to poverty but his Pīr prevented him from doing so and asked him to rely on Allah. One Maulānā 'Azīz al-Rahman of Fatik-Chari, being aware of his extreme poverty, offered his niece to the Maulānā to marry, the Maulānā accepted the proposal and the marriage was solemnised. Later he married six others but one after another. After the marriage, poverty bade him farewell and fortune smiled on him within the limit. The Maulānā was always in the habit of keeping himself aloof from public show and tried his utmost to lead a life in disguise and hence in the face of criticism, the Maulānā sometimes used to wear coat, sometimes shirt and also preferred to do domestic work like fishing through local hand-made net. In the later part of his life, he preferred shooting as hobby. The above practices of the Maulānā were then considered by his companions in Bengal as unwise and improper.¹ But the Maulānā turned a deaf ear to such criticism.

His role as a teacher in the Hathazari Madrasah :- Considering his vast learning, piety and dedication towards religious and spiritual knowledge, the members of the Dār al-'Ulūm, Hathazari madrasah forced him to accept the appointment as a teacher of the madrasah. Therefore,

1. Maulana 'Obaid al-Haq : Bangladesher Pīr Auliyaan, pp.338-39.

the Maulānā left his village home Shuabill and permanently settled in Hathazari Madrasah till his death. As a teacher, he proved his worth in teaching Hadīth, Tafsīr, Fiqh and other allied subjects and within a short time the students from various parts of the country started attending his classes with utmost devotion and affection. He left some very worthy students¹, the ^{names of the} more famous of them are given below :-

After that the Maulānā by dint of his quality in teaching and honesty in dealing, was elevated to the post of Principal, and he occupied this position till his death serving in the Madrasah for a total period of 35 years.

Service to humanity was the motto of the Maulānā. In view of the above, he was affectionate not only to the Muslims but also to all people irrespective of caste and creed. Hence Hindus and people of other different religions won his blessings and the Maulānā by his angelic character treated them well without any distinction.

His role as a Faqīh :- The Maulana is not known to have written any book on Fiqh, but he left a good number of Fatḥwas (legal opinions) on various problems. These legal opinions have been collected by Faiz Ahmad

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1. Late Muftī Faiz Allāh (R.A.) the Grand Muftī of the then East Pakistan and now Bangladesh.
 2. Late Maulānā Ahmad Hasan, Founder of Ziri Madrasah and Principal, Ziri Madrasah.
 3. Late Maulānā Abd al-Wahhāb, Principal, Dār al-'Ulūm Hathazari Madrasah.
 4. Maulānā Shāh 'Abd al-Majid, Madarshahi, Chittagong.
 5. Maulānā Muḥammad Ismā'īl, Principal, Madrasah Nāsir al-'Ulūm, Chittagong.
 6. Maulānā Muḥammad Yaqūb, Shaikh al-Hadīth, Hathazari Madrasah, Chittagong.
 7. Maulānā Muḥammad Iskandar.
 8. Maulānā Muḥammad Amīn, Muḥaddith, Babu Nagar Madrasah, Chittagong.
 9. Maulānā Nur Ahmad, Principal, Madrasah Nāsir al-Islām, Chittagong.
 10. Maulānā 'Abūl Qāsem Kamarlai, Madrasah Barura, Chittagong.

Islāmābādī in a book entitled Tadhkira-i-Damir.¹

It is said that once Muftī Azīz al-Huq² of Patiya sought for a legal opinion on the subject that during the out break of Cholera people offers the following Do'a (prayer)

لی خمسۃ اطفی بها حر الریاء الحاطمة بالمصطفی والمرقی وانباء والقاطبة

Trans:- "With me five (persons) by which devastating cholera can be perished and they are :- Prophet Muhammad (s), Hadrat 'Alī Murtda, his two sons and Faṭīma". Whether offering of such Do'a (prayer) by the people who are already attacked by such a fatal disease or to save others who are on safer side, leads the people towards shirk or not. Because in the eye of Shari'ah none can recover from any disease except Allah the Almighty who is all powerful and under whose power the life and death depends and so also the disease and recovery from a disease depends fully and wholly on Allah the Omnipotent. Hence offering of such Do'a, where a sense of hidden Shirk (شرک خفی) seems to have taken place. The Maulāna in reply to the above question said that the word (اطفی بها) that (با) is used for media (وسیلہ); just to have the nearness of Allah through this media to get rid of such fatal disease and calamity. Therefore, it is not illegal in the eye of Shari'ah.

(b). One Maulvī Abd al-Sattār narrates that once the Maulāna was asked to pass his opinion on Tobacco whether perception () is found there or not. The Maulāna passed his opinion that the Tobacco which is used by the people is free from perception.

1. Faiz Ahmad Islāmābādī : Tadhkira-i-Damir, p.90.

2. Muftī Azīz al-Huq was the Khalīfa of Maulāna Damir al-dīn and founder of Madrasah-i-Damiriya Quusem al-Ulum, Patya. Muftī Azīz al-Huq hails from Charkanai, Patya Upazilla, Chittagong.

(c). Another (سائل) problem was sought from the Maulana on the pushing of injection during fasting, whether it breaks the fast of a faster or not. The Maulana held that pushing injection does not effect fasting.

(d). It is said that the Maulana was once asked on the validity of putting on shirt (قميص) for which the 'Ulama looked down upon him. The Maulana replied that the word (قميص) shirt has been found in the holy Qur'an,¹ hence it is permissible and there is no bar in the Sharīah. He further said that because the 'Ulama of the present day dislikes its usage and abhors its use, he used shirt to justify its legality².

(d). Once a man named Sūfī Muhammad Miān asked the Maulana about (حق) truth, whether it is one or more? The Maulana replied that (حق) i.e. truth are manifold because if we do not consider this (حق) view then many problems will arise, Take for instance Imam al-Azām and Imam Malik; if we consider one of them on (حق) i.e. on truth, then we shall have to consider the other just to its opposite i.e. باطل (wrong), while in our (مذهب) Madhhab-i-Hanafī both are established on truth. Hence it is proved that (حق) truth are manifold.

I have collected a few instances from the book 'Tadhkira-i-Damir in order to show the Maulana's knowledge in Fiqh literature and his farsightedness on the subject needs no introduction.

Maulana Damir al-dīn lived a very simple and unostentatious life. He dressed himself like ordinary people and did not use the dress

1. Faiz Ahmad Islamabadi, Tadhkira-i-Damir, p.119,

2. S: XII, V, 28 VII. وان كان قميصه قدس دبر كذبت وهو من العادين

generally used by the 'Ulāmā of our country. For example, he used shirt with collar which the 'Ulāmā do not like being the dress of the English knowing people. This he did, just to keep the people away from him, so that they do not realise his spiritual attainments. The way of his life, the aim and objective of the Maulāna, his conversation with the people, his dealings and unusual patience were beyond perception and there lies the miracles of the Maulāna. In the Tadhkira-i-Damir, several karamats or miracles of the Maulāna have been mentioned. Some of them are as follows:-

(a). Sufi Muhammad Mian narrates¹ that once during his journey to perform Haj, all on a sudden the Maulāna fell ill and his condition was critical. Amongst his associates i.e. those who accompanied the Maulāna, were the founder and principal of the Hathazari Madrasah, Maulāna Habib Allah (R.A.) and Maulāna Habib al-Rahmān al-Makkī. These two personalities always attended on him during his ailment. At night the Maulāna, more than once was found to go out to respond to the natural call. One night it so happened that neither he woke up from sleep nor he was noticed to go out to attend the call of nature until dawn. At this all his associates tried to ascertain the matter from him, he replied that all Auliya came to attend him and he was in deep conversation with them. So, he thought it discourteous to leave their company.

(b). The Principal of the Hathazari madrasah² narrates that once his (the Principal's) grand-father invited the Maulāna to his (grand father's) residence. The residence consisted of two rooms only. At night the host

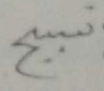
1. Faiz Ahmad Islamabadi : Tadhkira-i-Damir, p.104.

2. Maulāna Habib Allah was ~~the~~ then the Principal of the Hathazari madrasah.

came out to see the welfare of his guest and found that the Maulāna was offering prayer, but at his approach within a twinkling of an eye he found that the Maulāna was asleep.

(c). Once it so happened that while the Maulāna fell ill during his stay at Rangoon, Maulāna Yūnus¹ the present Principal of Patiya Damīria madrasah, left Chittagong for Rangoon. The Maulāna once told Maulāna Yūnus, "To-day a group of the companions of the Prophet(s) visited me owing to my illness and amongst them one tall-figured man appeared before me shouting, 'O, the Qutb, O, the Qutb'.

(d). On the authority of Maulāna Yūnus ---the Khalīfa of the Maulāna, it is said that once the Maulāna fell victim of an incurable disease and every body lost hope of his recovery and people were at a loss ^{to see} the condition of the Maulāna, but the Maulāna solaced the people saying, "the servant of the Prophet shall meet death at the age of the Prophet and this time I, by the grace of Allah shall recover ^{it}". Actually the Maulāna's prediction came true, and he died just at the age of 63.²

(e). Maulāna 'Abd al-Wahhab who was the Principal of the Hathazari madrasah at the later age of his life and died recently, and who was a Khalīfa of Maulāna Ashraf 'Alī Thanawī told that once he went to the Maulāna to have his lessons from him and he (the Maulāna) was taking rest but his fingers were counting beads (). He also witnessed the same while the Maulāna was in sleep.

End of his life and death :- As regards his death late Muftī 'Azīz al-Haqq, one of the Principal Khalīfas of the Maulāna, says that the Maulāna used

1. Maulāna Yūnus is at present Patron-in-chief of the Madrasah-i-Damīria Quāsem al-'Ulūm, Patiya and also the Khalīfa of Maulāna Damīr-al-dīn.
2. Faiz Ahmad, Tadhkirah-i-Damir, p.127.

to tell a couple of months before his death that his end was drawing near, that he reached the age of the Prophet and what is the use of living in this world? He also used to say زمین کی پیٹ بہتر ہے

"the belly of the earth is better than its Surface,¹ if not why Allah has preferred the belly of the earth for His Habib (beloved) Prophet (s)? In such discourses with the Maulāna, the people present had already been informed of his death by divine message. A few days before his death, he Maulāna started storing provisions more than was necessary for his family and wrote down an (وصیت نامہ) admonition-deed probably in the month of Jamādī-al-Awwal, the day being Monday. On the following day, his wife and the mother of the Maulāna, Umme Habibah appeared before him and tried to know the reason of his storing provisions. The Maulāna replied to them that he was to go elsewhere and that's why he made such arrangement, so that in his absence, his children should not suffer. Soon he got temperature and gradually it went on increasing; experienced doctors were called in against his will. The news of his illness spread in the nook and corner, people thronged around his residence to have the last glimpse of him. The night before his death, he called all his family members and instructed them to abide by the injunctions of Allah and His Prophet. On the following day i.e. on Saturday he performed his Fazr prayer and recited the holy Qurān at 4 p.m. uttering the name Allah, Allah. After that he began uttering Allah Allah and breathed his last. That was Sunday, 29th Jamadi I A.H. 1359/A.D.1940.¹

1. Faiz Ahmad Islāmabadi, Tadhkira-i-Bamir, pp.244-251.

List of his Khalīfas :- (Spiritual students).

A list of his Khalīfas are given below:-

1. Maulāna 'Abd al-Wāḥed, Hawla, Chittagong.
2. Maulāna Shāh Isḡandar, Kharandip, Chittagong.
3. Mufti Shāh 'Azīz al-Huq, Charkānī, Chittagong.
4. Maulāna Aḥmad, Mehra, Chittagong.
5. Maulāna Mūsa, Babu Nagar, Fatik Chari, Chittagong.
6. Maulāna Muḥammad Amjād, Madarsha, Chittagong.
7. Maulāna Muḥammad Yūnus, Mekhal, Chittagong.
8. Maulāna Qari Ibrāhim Khalīl, Chandpur, Comilla.
9. Maulāna 'Abd al-Qaiyyum, Gahira, Chittagong.
10. Maulāna Hāfez al-Raḥmān, Hathazari, Chittagong.
11. Maulāna 'Obaid al-Raḥman, Madarsha, Chittagong.

His mazar :- His mazar is situated out side the Campus of the Hathazari madrasah, Chittagong. There is neither ceiling over his grave nor it is surrounded by walls. In the eastern side of the mazar runs the Hathazari Road and on the western side of the mazar the Railway station is at a stone's throw. To the southern side of the grave, the distance of the madrasah is not far off and the northern side is attached to a village. Moreover, there are many graves in the grave-yard but some are distinguished by some name plates only.

Opinions of some prominent 'Ulamā:- The Muftī-i-Āzam,¹ Chittagong late Maulāna Faīd Allāh, in appreciating his genius, uncommon-practice and his scholarship in Sharī'ah and Tariqat says that he led a very simple and

1. Late Muftī Faīd Allāh was the Muḥaddith of the Hathazari madrasah and the grand Muftī of Chittagong. He hails from Mekhal, Hathazari Upazilla, Chittagong.

unostentatious life; he never publicised himself, nor exposed himself to the people. He attracted both the 'Ulama and the general people by his strength of character and by his staunch belief and attachment to the path of Allah, and His Apostle. He was a great Faqih (Jurist) of his time, under whose able guidance Mufti Fa'id Allah studied some authoritative books on Fiqh and Hadith.

The late Maulāna Faḍl al-Rahmān,¹ retired Principal, Madrasah 'Alia Dār al-Ulūm, Chandanpura, Chittagong, who was one of the eminent Khalīfas of Maulāna Zafar Ahmad Uthmānī passed comments on the personality of the Maulāna as a Sūfī, Muftī and says 'In this connexion I should have it on record that during my close association with him in performing Haj, I had the opportunity to remain with him round the clock in the same house and he blessed me with his companionship in all the rituals of Haj whereupon his amazing character perplexed me. Hence I am of the opinion that his death is the death of the world.'

(c). Shaikh al-Hadīth Maulāna 'Abd al-Wadūd praised him as a staunch-follower of the Sunnah of the Prophet(s) to the letter and in spirit and says² "The Maulāna left a lesson and was never afraid of the critics. He was a true follower of Sunnah and ardent restrainer of Shirk and Bid'at. This was the motto of his life. In this respect he believed in ' لا يخافون رومة للإمام " i.e. he was not at all afraid of the back-biting and undue criticism of others. He was very much kind and fond of the kids. Affection and love was inherent in his character. He was an ocean both in spiritual and religious

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1. Maulāna Faḍl al-Rahmān was the Principal of Madrasah-i-'Alia Dargah 'Ulūm, Chandanpura, Chittagong. He hails from village Jaldi, Banskhali Upazilla, Chittagong.
 2. Fa'id Ahmad Islamabadi: Tadhkira-i-Damir, pp.196-198.

terminology. Really his death made the world orphan."

(d). One of the most eminent Khalīfas of the Maulānā was Muftī 'Azīz al-Huq, the founder-Principal of Damīriā Qāsem al-'Ulūm-Madrasah, Patiya. He was a promising personality in achieving Khilāfat from the Shaikh al-Mashāikh Maulānā Damīr al-dīn at whose indication the Patiya madrasah was founded. He was an ardent follower of his Murshid, whose excursion into scholarship exhibited in his extra-ordinary personality made him a perfect spiritualist, Muftī, Muhaddith and above all, an accomplished scholar in Shari'ā and Tariqat. The following verses composed by him in Persian language shall suffice his judgement about his Murshid.¹

(۱) ساقی جام هدایت یاری سرگشتگان + سیری شیخی همسیر الدین احمد بیگمان
 از تو جهات سامی ناری نوری میشود + خاکی را پاکی زرد ناصی از کاملدان
 سجده گاه حضرت والا شده غرش برین + گرچ بینی جسم پاکش در صفوف مرحمان
 غیر برج معارف معدن صدق و صدا
 طالب و مطلوب رحمانی امام سالکان

Trans:- (1). (The Maulānā) i.e. my Shaikh Damīr al-dīn Ahmad undoubtedly was such a personality to make one drink from the treasure of his guidance from going stray.

(2). His spiritual force turns the dweller of Hell into the dweller of Heaven. The earthly man gains purity and the imperfect turns into perfection.

(3). Though you witness him in the row of the general people (at the time of offering prayer) his place of prostration (سجده) is in the holy (عرش) throne.

1. Faiz Ahmad Islāmābādī : Tadhkira-i-Damīr, p.3

(4). He is a star of celestial sky and the treasure of truth and purity. He is a seeker of Allah the Beneficent and vice-versa, and a leader of Sālek ().

Maulānā 'Aziz al-Huq on the strength of the above verses, has in fine, distinguished the guardianship of the Maulānā amongst the saints of the 20th century through his invaluable qualities in letter and spirit. •

5. Shah Maulānā Walī Ahmad (R.A.)

Early life :-Maulānā Shah Wali Ahmad is one of the renowned Sūfis of Chittagong in the present century. He comes of a noble family from village Mandarbaria, Upazilla Mirsarai in the district of Chittagong. His father's name was Kuna Mian and Mother's name was Safarbibī. He was born in approximately A.H.1285/A.D.1868.¹

His shrine :- The mazar² of Maulānā Walī Ahmad (R.A.) stands just on the Chittagong - Dhaka Trunk Road on its western side at 37th mile from Chittagong. The mazar is a pucca structure, beautifully built, which is attached to a mosque. There is no ceiling over the mazar. A big pond is also attached to the mosque and a rest house was built up by the Maulānā during his life time in order to accommodate people and for himself while he occasionally used to go to his village home. The mosque was actually erected by his (Maulānā's) ancestors but it was reconstructed by him as was told by his brother,³ who survived him.

The Rest house is a semi-pucca building which is still in the same

1. Nizām al-dīn : An article - published in Sangram, on Sunday, the 25th of Chaitra, B.S.1390, Captioned 'Islāmī Duniyā'.

2. See plate VII (b).

3. Late Hājī Lāl Mian, died a few years later after the death of the Maulānā.

position. It is assumed that the Rest House was built for visitors both during his life time and after his death. He never called it as Khanqah. According to his cousin, Maulāna Wadhī Allāh, the Maulāna belonged to a saintly family. Some of his ancestors were also saints. The Maulāna started his ~~educational~~ education in the Mithachara-madrasah which was one of the oldest institutions of the time. After completing his primary education, he proceeded to Deoband for higher studies. Deoband has always been a centre of higher Islamic learning and before 1947, persons of this part of the world desirous of higher education preferred to study at Deoband. He studied at Deoband for twelve years on different subjects and proved his uncommon scholarship and in-born genius. He was in Deoband till 1917. The learned 'Ulāmā of Deoband conferred on him the title of (بحر العلوم) 'the ocean of knowledge'.

Spiritual knowledge :- The Maulāna received his spiritual knowledge and Khilāfat (delegation of authority) from Maulāna Mahmūd al-Hasan of Deoband, who is popularly known as Shaikh al-Hind in recognition of his versatile genius.¹ Maulāna Walī Ahmad had the opportunity of having association with such a personality who favoured him with the Khilāfat. After his return, the Maulāna engaged himself in teaching at the Hathazari Madrasah for long. He was also instrumental in establishing the Fatehpur madrasah and taught in that madrasah for six years as Head Maulāna.

1. According to the Shāh Walī Allāh's prediction, Maulāna Mahmūd al-Hasan falls in the category of (مقبول) as man of unfathomable knowledge and he (Mahmūd al-Hasan) was one of them. Once Maulāna Husain Ahmad al-Madani, while discussing about Al-Haj Emdād Allāh (R.A.) passed a remark on Mahmūd al-Hasan as has been quoted in the book 'Tahmīd' "Don't consider Maulāna Mahmūd al-Hasan a man of shallow knowledge, he would be of Shaikh of his age".

After that the Maulāna gave up his teaching job chiefly with a view to devoting himself completely to esoteric knowledge. He came to the Chittagong city and preferred to stay in different places and finally stayed more or less permanently at Kadamtali, Dhaka Trunk Road, Chittagong.

The present writer had the opportunity to come in close contact with the Maulāna . He first met him (the Maulāna) in the Collegiate School where the Maulāna stayed for some time; later when he transferred his residence to Kadamtali, the writer came in his close contact. The Maulāna's residence was just near the house of the writer, and the Maulāna called him Nati or grand son.

Spiritual education:- As discussed earlier, the Maulāna took his Baiyat (oath of fealty) from the Shaikh al-Hind, Mahmūd al-Hasan of Deoband who was a great scholar and a Sufi, thus achieving greatness both in exoteric and esoteric knowledge. The Maulāna was a celebrate althrough. Like his teacher, Maulāna Walī Ahmad was also a great scholar in Islamic science, but at the same time was a great Sufi. He combined in himself the knowledge of both Sharīah and Mārifat. He was a follower of the Qurān and the Sunnah and was never found to deviate even an inch from the path of Sharīah. He was an accomplished Sufi, a spiritual guide and an ocean of knowledge. He actually delved deep in the ocean of Tawhīd (oneness of Allah).

Poetic talent of the Maulāna :- The poetic talent of the Maulāna was of uncommon quality which earned for him reputation amongst the intellectuals. His composition of poetry in Arabic, Persian and Bengali

languages proved his command over the languages. The poet Dhulfiqar Haider¹, a prominent poet of Bangladesh, commenting over his matchless quality of writing of poetry says " তিনি কবিতার সাথে এতো মিশে গিয়েছিলেন যে, শেষ পর্যন্ত বুঝতেই মুশকিল হয়ে পড়ে তিনি কি কবিতার মাঝে হারিয়ে গেছেন, নাকি কবিতা তাঁর মাঝে হারিয়ে গেছে "।

Trans :- 'He was so much dissolved in poetry that finally it becomes difficult to assess whether he lost himself in poetry or poetry itself lost in himself'. In order to examine the above quotation a few lines of his (Maulana's) poetry collected from various sources in the above languages are quoted below. Once the Maulana wrote to Sufi Dhulfiqar Haider a few verses from two of his poems. These are as follows:-²

১/ দেখো দেখো কবি ঐ যে

উদিত রবি

গগনে মেঘের ছায়া আলোর দুশমন ।

দুশমন যদি না রহিল দোষ

কিসে হয় উদ্ঘাটন ।

দুশমনকে হেদায়েত, বশুকে নাজাত

এ আরজীর প্রার্থী হয়ে করো মোনাজাত

আবীর কাটিয়ে যায় আসিলে প্রভাত ।

২/ দুঃখ বাদে সুখ আসে

কোরানের বাণী

জ্ঞানীগণ সবে নেয় এ বাক্য মানি ।।

-
1. Sufi Dhulfiqar Haider, a resident of Dhanmondi Residential area, Dhaka was the recipient of Presidents' Gold medal on the occasion of Ekushe February in the year 1978 A.D.
 2. The above verses of the poetry were collected from the grand son (from brother's side) of the Maulana, named Nizam al-din.

Trans :- (1). Beheld I O, poet the sun is up,
The cloud is the foe to sun,
if there is no foe, there is no way to find fault with.
Inspire the foes on the right way,
rescue the friends from pathos;
this should be your appeal to Almighty
You see, the dawn comes out of darkness. ^{it}
Trans:- (2). Happiness follows misery, the Quran declares, and the
wise abide by it.

Once a close associate of the Maulana, Ghaffar by name, through a letter, sought relief through blessings of the Maulana. The Maulana wrote to him a couplet in Persian language, the Bengali version is stated below:-

কর মৃত্যুচিন্তা রিজিকের নয়
সময় মতো দুটোই আসবে সুবিক্রয় ।

Trans:- Think of death not of provisions,
both are sure to come in time.

In Arabic, he composed some verses even when he was a student at the Deoband madrasah. Some of the verses are as follows:-¹

(۱) لقد كنت رحلت الى ديونند + لاخذ العلوم من اشياخها
فلما وصلت الى المدرسة + تحيرت من رؤيتها كاخفا
الانما حجة في الدنيا + ثمار المني شفت في شافها
ديها شيخ كرام رحمة + كان الطيور لا فراخها

1. These verses were composed in Arabic a few days ^{after} of his entrance in the Deoband madrasah in A.D.1904 and the same was published in the same year by (دار الاتاعة) the publication department of Deoband.

- Trans:- (1). While I went to Deoband (madrasah) in order to store up knowledge from its luminaries,
- (2). When I reached the Madrasah, I was at my wit's end to view its buildings.
- (3). Be aware I, it is a Heaven in the earth, the desired fruits are hanging in its branches.
- (4). And in it, the teachers are noble (in character) and kind hearted, as if the birds for their nestlings.

In Persian language he wrote an anthology of poetry¹, where he (the Maulānā) dealt with mysticism. A few verses are being quoted below which have been composed in appreciation of the Prophet.

(۱) محمد از آن عالم اندر جهان + چون خورشید تابنده بر آسمان
 (۲) محمد چه؟ یک آفتاب منیر + همه عالم از او درخشنده گیر
 (۳) محمد چه؟ یک شمع روشن رمان + کند مستنیرت دین چراغ
 (۴) محمد چه؟ یک قلمم به کنار + کند مستنیرت یل و بهار

- Trans :- (1). The Prophet is like a sun in the sky (for its power of illumination).
- (2). What is Muhammad (S) ? He is like a sun, the whole world is illuminated from his sun light.
- (3). What is Muhammad (S) ? He is a candle which is a candle of enlightened brain, from which the light of the religion gains its light.
- (4) What is Muhammad (S) ? He is like an endless ocean from which the day and night get blessings.

1. These verses are collected from his book, Gulzar-i-'Ilām and the book was edited and published by Muhammad Sa'eed al-Rahman, Barqi Press, Delhi.

A few minutes before his death he composed the following verses in Persian:

(۱) چه غم داری دل ریش تنه اریس عالم + چون اولاد رسول رسیست همای
(۲) هو السید الرعی الی السنه + مولد پاکش مدینه رحمة الله

Tran:- (1). Why are you so anxious O, Walī Ahmad ? because the descendant of the holy Prophet is your companion.

(2). He is (purely) a Saḥyid, the leader caller towards Sunnah (of the Prophet), whose holy birth is in Madina, where the bounty of Allah showers on.

His greatness can also be assessed as a prose writer. One of his letters¹ shall suffice to justify the statement. The letter runs thus :-

দোয়াবরেষু ,

আপনার লেখনি পেয়ে মুত হয়েছি । রীতিমতো এভাবে লিখে খোঁজ খবরের আদান প্রদানের ব্যবস্থা করলে আমাদের মধ্যে প্রেম মমতা ও ভক্তি প্রবণতার স্রোত জোর চলবে । জমিজমা দেখলে ও নিত্য নতুন বাড়ী বেঁধে আপনি পার্শ্ব সুখ সূচনোর ব্যবস্থা করুন । আর আপনার প্রয়োজনের অধিক ধন পরকালের মংগল নিমিত্তে ব্যয়ের অতিপ্রায় জেগে উঠুক । এ আশীর্বাদ রইলো । বধু মাতাকে দোয়া জানাবেন । আপনাদের দাম্পত্য জীবন অধিক সুখের জুড়ে উঠুক , আমি সতত এ প্রার্থনা দয়াময়ের দরবারে পেশ করি ।

স্বাস্থ্য তো আমার আর কেরার নয় । তবে দিন দিন কিছুটা ভালো বোধ করছি । আবার কখন অচল হয়ে পড়ি -----তার নিশ্চয়তা নেই । তবে সৃষ্টির নিয়ম দুঃখ, রোগ-যন্ত্রণা মানব জীবনে লেগেই থাকবে । তাই সুকীয়া রোগ যন্ত্রণার আক্রমণে ও আপনি সবরের আদর্শ গ্রহন করুন । আর বিশেষ কি লিখিব । শুনঃ আমাদের সর্বাঙ্গীন কুশল কামনা করে ইতি দিচ্ছি -

ওলী আহমদ -

The letter itself proves the potentialities of the Maulāna in writing prose which needs no further introduction.

The letter was addressed to poet Dhulfiqar Haider from Madarbari, 1.1.1960.

Fiqh literature :- The Maulānā has also shown his eminence as a Faqīh (Jurist); very recently a manuscript on Fiqh has been collected from his grand son (From brother's side) which mostly deals with the problems on Hadīth literature and are mainly connected with Sharī'ah. I am told that he left another manuscript on Fiqh,¹ but due to the carelessness the book is probably missing. In that manuscript the Maulānā, as I am told, he deals critically with important problems of Sharī'ah i.e. Salāt, Sawm, Hajj, and Zakāt.

After his retirement from Hathazari madrasah, he did not accept any other profession but devoted himself completely to religion. He engaged himself to invite the visitors towards Tawhīd (the oneness of Allah) and the Sunnah of the Prophet through his mystic preachings and this he continued till his death. In his daily life, he was found very much hospitable, kind and benevolent. No visitor could say that he was not offered at least a cup of tea. It was his habit to serve the visitors with his own hands. It was really his nobility of character that he never made any distinction between high and low, rich and poor but treated them all in equal footing. All people, Muslims, Hindus, Christians and even low-caste ones had easy access to him.

His miracles:- There had been a great spiritual transformation in him which is exemplified in his deeds and personality as I have indicated earlier. Noble qualities abounded in his fine character, truthfulness, beneficence, recognition and fulfilment of duties, forbearance, meekness,

1. The manuscript is in Persian language and now is under the custody of Nizām al-dīn, the Maulānā's grand son. The Maulānā has actually dealt with the problems on Hadīth entitled Al-Mishkāt al-Masābih.

fortitude, courage, profundity, humbleness, forgiveness and loyalty were a few of the outstanding traits that endeared him to the hearts of men.

A few of his miracles are stated below.

(a). Kadamtali¹, where the residence of the Maulana was situated was notoriously famous for people of bad character who were engaged in looting, dacoity and all sorts of corruption. The Maulana's stay in the area, brought about a tremendous change amongst the people. Gradually, the people gave up their bad habits and accepted honourable trades and business. Now a days the area is an important commercial centre in Bangladesh.

(b). Once the Maulana fell into a serious illness². His close associates and devotees, on the advice of the Physicians got himself admitted to the General Hospital at Andarkilla, Chittagong against his will.³ People from various corners of Chittagong even from out side, thronged to the gate of the hospital to have a look at him. The authorities of the hospital gave strict order not to disturb the Maulana as he was severely ill. After one day of his admission into the hospital, a hand out was issued by the then hospital Superintendent,⁴ Captain Abu al-Qasem to the effect that the condition of the Maulana was very much grave and within 2 A.M. he might collapse. At this the people became more curious to know his condition and impatiently waited before the gate of the hospital. It is surprising to note that

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1. Kadamtali is under the Union of West Madarbari, adjacent to the Dhaka-Chittagong Trunk Road, Chittagong.
 2. In the year 1958.
 3. At that time the Medical College was not established.
 4. Captain Abu Al-Qasem, Vill. & P.S. Raesan, Dist. Chittagong.

at 2 A.M. the Maulānā asked his Khāden for earth ⁱⁿ order to perform his Tayammum, instead of ^{using} water. Then he stood up to perform his Tahajjud prayer. At this, the Physicians were at a loss and said what a miracle it was! This incidence needs no proof for his fear for Allah on the one hand and his miracle on the other. After a few days of his stay in the hospital, the Maulānā was discharged and again came to his Qadamtali residence. The said Captain Abū al-Qāsem became his devotee. Once it was reported by him (the physician) that he was transferred either to Dhaka or to Khulna and was to report to his new station immediately, and he requested the Maulānā to bless for the cancellation of the transfer order. Then the Maulānā advised the physician to bring for him a new pen. Accordingly the doctor brought for him a new pen. After taking the pen in his own hand, the Maulānā advised the doctor to write an application to the appropriate authority with this pen. The doctor did accordingly; after a few days, to his utter surprise, it was intimated to him that his transfer order was cancelled.

(c). Once I myself was attacked by a serious illness, in the later part of 1959 while I was a student of 1st year B.A. class in the Chittagong College. The illness took a serious turn leading to typhoid. Treatment of different physicians were going on but of no use. The Maulānā was then at his village home Mandarbaria, P.S. Mirsarai. My late mother sent one of my relations to the Maulānā for Du'a (blessings) in order to get early recovery. After listening to the entire story of my ailment, he sent ^{to} for me one or two seers of candy and a wooden T'awidh (تَوِيد) (amulet) written on it some Arabic verses with the advice to hang the T'awidh on the neck and to take the candy twice a day. After

taking the same, by the grace of Allah, I was cured.

(d). Once a man accompanied by his daughter came to the Maulāna while I was sitting beside him and most humbly said that his daughter lost both her eye-sight and all his attempts to get her cured failed. The Maulāna gave the man some water in a bottle and asked him to apply the same in the affected eyes while going to bed. The man on the following day came to the Maulāna in a charming mood and offered some thing to him (the Maulāna) with utmost courtesy. After accepting the tohfa, the Maulāna advised both father and daughter to say their daily prayer and to follow the Sharīah in letter and spirit.

(e). A man who had deep love and respect for the Maulana popularly known as Maulana Ghauli¹, fell victim of heart disease. One day a man of his neighbouring area gave him a taka, a pomegranate (আম্রা) and a letter in his sick-bed and told him that these were sent by the Maulāna Walī Ahmad. This mysterious action of the Maulāna made him (Ghauli) surprised because the Maulāna did not know about his illness. After opening the letter, Maulāna Ghauli saw a few verses were written in Bengali alongwith Darud Sharif in a poetic manner. These verses are stated below :-

আল্লাহর জন্যে সকল প্রশংসা গীতি
সালাম মাওলানা গাউস তোমার প্রতি ।
রোগ মুক্তির জন্যে পড় এ দরুদখানা,
ইনশাআল্লাহ অতি সত্ত্বর পাবে পানাহ্,
কর মওতের চিন্তা, রিভিকের নয়
সময় মত এ দুটি আপিসে বিস্তর ।

1. Afzal Karim Siddiqi, Chattagram Times, Chittagong, 6th November, 1961.

It is said that after reciting the Darūd, which was written beside these verses, Maulāna Ghauth came round forthwith and was never attacked by heart disease till his death.

Maulāna Walī Ahmad also wrote profusely. His published books, anthology of poetry in Arabic and Persian are four in number. They are as follows :-

- (1). Nazam al-Aqā'id (in Arabic and in Persian).¹
- (2). Gulzar-i-Ghlan (in Persian).²
- (3). Makātib-i-Manzūm (In Arabic and translated in Persian).³
- (4). Qasā'id (in Arabic).⁴

Besides these, some of his manuscripts on Fiqh literature are also preserved.⁵ Many more manuscripts were lost due to the carelessness of his relations.

This great personality earned the commendations from noted luminaries of home and abroad such as Hadrat Hussain Ahmad al-Madani, Mufti Muhammad Shafi, Maulāna Ashraf 'Ali Thanawi, the great poet of Egypt Abd al-Hamid Afindi, Jamil Ahmad Saharanpuri and Mufti 'Azizul-Huq etc.⁶

His death :- This great personality who was a great Sufi, a Mufti, a teacher, a poet, a prose-writer, died on Thursday, the 15th of Shaban the 11th February, 1960.⁷ His namāz-i-Janāza (Funeral prayer) was held on

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1. Published and edited by Abū al-Muzaffar Nadir al-Zaman, Barqi press, Delhi, in A.H.1353/A.D.1934.
 2. Published and edited by Muhammad Sa'eed al-Rahman from Barqi press, Delhi, A.H.1350/A.D.1931.
 3. Published and edited by Abū al-Muzaffar Nadir al-Zaman, from Deoband... in A.H.1350/A.D. 1931.
 4. Published and edited by Abū al-Muzaffar Nadir al-Zaman from Barqi-Press, Delhi in A.H.1350/A.D.1931.
 5. The daily Purba Tara, Chittagong, 22nd March, 1981.
 6. Muhammad Nizam al-din, The daily Sangram, captioned 'Islami Dunya', Dhaka, 25th Chaitra, Sunday.
 7. The Daily Purba Tara, Chittagong, 22nd March, 1981.

Friday, the 12th of February, 1960 and the prayer was led by Maulana 'Abd al-Ghani. About seventy thousand people from different corners of the country attended the funeral ceremony of the Maulana. Those who attended the funeral ceremony of the Maulana say that all the fish of the attached pond floated near the bank of the pond, and the Sufi interpretation is that the fish also joined the Jana'za prayer.

Spiritual teaching:- He did never believe in Pirism and did never act as a Pir. Though he himself was a Khalifa of Shaikh al-Hind Maulana Mahmud al-Hasan, he never left any Khalifah. After the death of the Maulana, as I have heard personally from several persons namely the learned 'Ulama like Saiyyid 'Abd al-Karim al-Madani, Pesh Imam, Jane mosque, Anderkilla, Chittagong, Maulana 'Abd al-Ghani of Mirsari, Mufti 'Aziz al-Huq of Patiya, that the Maulana was the Qutb of Chittagong.

6. Shah Muhammad Fadl al-Karim (R.A.)

Shah Muhammad Fadl al-Karim was born approximately in A.D.1910 in the North Madarsha, P.S.Hathazari, district Chittagong. He was born of a noble and orthodox family. His father late Muhammad Tahur 'Ali was at first serving as Go-down Sarkar in Rangoon, now the capital of Burma for a few years. His mother Mehrun-Nesa was a lady with charming personality and uncommon piety. His father was blessed through his first wife with two sons and one daughter, the Shah Sahab being the elder and Mr. Ahmad Husain being the younger brother.¹ His father had another wife who died in his life time leaving only one son Mr. Abul Husain,² the only step-brother of the Shah Sahab.

1. Mr. Ahmad Husain the younger-brother of the Shah Sahab retired as a Principal of the Nazrul Islam Government College, Dhaka who is still alive.
2. Who is at present serving in the Capital city- Riad in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

His primary education : The Shah Sahab had his primary education in his village maktab at north madarsha under the care of his able mother. After the completion of his primary education of the local Maktab, the Shah Sahab got himself admitted into the Mohra High school and successfully Matriculated from that school and could not prosecute further study due to poverty. As he had to shoulder the responsibility of his family, he accepted a job of a teacher in the local primary school at Madarsha but after serving one year only, the Shah Sahab was asked by his father to proceed to Burma, where he was employed as a clerk in a go-down and continued his service for about a year. He took up the responsibility of looking after the higher education of his brother Ahmad Husain. From Rangoon he returned home and once again engaged himself as a primary school teacher in Fatehpur primary school. He was married to a Zamindar family of his own village and his wife Marium Begum who is the daughter of late Musharraff Ali. It is said that the Shah Sahab also served as a Compounder under his only brother-in-law for a few years.

His Baiyat :- Before his marriage he took his Baiyat from the late Mufti Faiz Allah (R.A.). Although the Shah Sahab is not known to have received any formal religious education from his boyhood,¹ he was very much particular in (صلاة) prayer, (صوم) fasting and other religious rites of Islam and followed the same to the latter and spirit. After ten years of his married life, as has been told by his wife, the Shah Sahab became very much ascetic and severed all connections with

1. This has been explored during my inter-view with the wife of the Shah Sahab at his residence.

worldly life and disappeared from house nearly for about 12 years. After an interval of five or six months he used to appear mostly at mid-night and on arrival at the house, he used to recite the holy Qur'an with utmost devotion. Sometimes, it was noticed that he used to recite a particular Sura or chapter of the holy Qur'an ten or twelve times. I was told by the wife of the Shah Sahab that 'It is my conviction that by doing so, he became Hafez-i-Qur'an'. His stay at the house was either for a day or two. Such condition continued at a stretch for twelve years. According to some authoritative version,¹ the Shah Sahab, almost passed his time in different hilly areas in and out side the city. Sometimes he was noticed by the people, sweeping the filthy things of the patients in the Hospital and attended on them as an unknown person in disguise.

On my personal survey in the area, I met a very old man Maulvi Amin al-Rahman aged about 90, who told me that the Shah Sahab had also irreversible respect and reverence

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1. The wife of the Shah Sahab told me, ~~that~~ "Once I asked the Shah Sahab about his disappearance for a long period from the domestic life as well as of his duty to his family life. In answer to my question in a gentle but ecstatic way told me that hilly life is better than a domestic life."

to a Majdhūb¹ who was the class mate of his Pīr late Muftī Faīd-Allāh. The old man very often visited the house of the Shāh Sāheb and sometimes had his lunch and dinner also at his residence. The mazar of the Majdhūb is nearly one and half miles away from the residence of the Shāh Sāheb.

It appears therefore, that Shāh Fadl al-Karīm was in close touch with great contemporary mystics. Therefore, endowed with such quality, he became totally indifferent towards worldly as well as domestic life for about twelve years. During this period, two of his daughters were given in marriage in different places by his brother Ahmad Husain, whereas the Shāh Sāheb was neither aware of it nor did he burden any responsibility, nor did he attend the marriage ceremony. He was indeed, deeply engrossed in his ascetic mission. After passing twelve years of his life in such an indifferent manner as has been narrated by his wife, slowly and gradually he turned his attention

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1. The name of the Majdhūb is Maulāna Abd al-Majid (R.A.) who was a close friend and class mate of Madrat Muftī Faīd Allāh of Hathazari Chittagong. The above version corroborates also with the statements of the Shāh Sāheb's wife and supports the version of the above person. This Majdhūb-i-Sālek (مجدوب سالک) had a magnetic power ushered in him through celestial power which he (the Majdhūb) absorbed in him through severe endeavour. The people of the area is of opinion that, Allah knows best in what stage he ascended to have the nearness of Almighty Allah. One example will suffice it to say that in my presence (i.e. presence of the old man) a young daughter of the Majdhūb complained to her father (the Majdhūb) that they had nothing in their house, neither rice nor vegetables to cook for themselves, hence ~~kharak~~ the entire members of the family shall have to starve. Hearing the complaint, the Majdhūb did not utter a single word. The old man said that within his presence, he saw a man was proceeding towards the residence of the Majdhūb burdened with two baskets full of cooked rice and cooked meat; seeing this, he (the old man) became perplexed and guessed that this food shall meet the requirements of the inmates of the house at least for a week. Moreover, the man who brought the food, was quite unknown to him nor did he ever see the man. The man again started telling me more about the Majdhūb regarding many of his amazing power vested in him by Almighty Allah, but due to shortage of space, these are not discussed here. The Shāh Sāheb kept company with such persons who were very much spiritually developed.

towards domestic matters. From time to time he started sending daily necessities to his wife. Thus he became a worldly man, though he actually lived out of home, visiting the same at long intervals. But actually he did so, in order to efface the doubts that arose in the mind of his wife and also in the minds of the people who were acquainted with him that he was indeed indifferent to family burden and the same was successfully shouldered by his brother Ahmad Husain. The latter made no discrimination as guardian of the family in the absence of his elder-brother, - the Shāh Sāhib.¹

1. On my interview with the wife of the Shāh Sāhib, I asked her the questions whether in the absence of the Shāh Sāhib, any of his family member suffered by any means. On this question, her reply was, they did not at all suffer in any way. In the above context, I would like to refer a verse from the holy Qur'an which the Prophet Ibrāhīm(S) addressed to his uncle Āzar (وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ أَخَارَ) (when Ibrāhīm said to his father Āzar). Here Āzar according to the exegetical meaning of the word (أَبِي) i.e. father is used in place of uncle, it means that in the absence of the father, uncle symbolises the father in letter and in spirit. Hadrat Ibrāhīm(S) lost his father and became orphan at an early age and his uncle Āzar took up the responsibility of bringing him up and hence the Almighty Allah elevated him to the position of father for shouldering the responsibility and duty of father. In the absence of the Shāh Sāhib, his brother Ahmad Husain took up the responsibility of the members of his family of his elder brother to the best of his capacity and capability while Shāh Sāhib was in search of having the pleasure of celestial power----the Almighty Allah. In support of the Qur'ānic version, we also find the Prophetic tradition which abides by the same meaning as the Prophet says 'أَعْمَرْتُ أَيْمَانًا' i.e. the uncle is like his father. It strengthens the fact that in the absence of father, rearing up the children of brother lies with the uncle as a duty. Moreover, we find, there are many instances like late Muhammad Shafi Shah, Badna Shah, Shah Ghulam al-Rahman etc. who did not care for anything of worldly life as they were totally engrossed in celestial pleasure.
- (a). Please see for detail Tafsir-i-Jalalain S:VI,V,75 also Tafsir-i-Ruhul Māni, S:XIX,V.42.
- (b). Please also Mishkat al-Masābih, Chapter al-Zakat, p.156, corroborated by Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim.

His appearance in the Port city of Chittagong was noticed seven to eight years before his death as confirmed by his wife. I had the chance to meet this mighty soul at my residence in the year 1968 A.D. and since then the Shāh Ṣāḥab started coming to my residence occasionally. He was found, during his stay in the city, taking shelter in the residence of many people whom he liked but his stay in their residence was of temporary nature. During his stay in the city, first I found him to stay in the residence of Mr. Ahmad Husain who is now, Associate Professor of Bengali in the Government City college, Chittagong. It was the Shāh Ṣāḥab who got him (Ahmad Husain) married in an aristocratic and wealthy family of Chittagong. After a few months he used to stay in the Railway station colony, just beside the Chittagong Collegiate High School, in the residence of a Railway employee, whose son Rabi' al-Husain was then my student in the then City College, Chittagong. Thereafter he shifted to the residence of Mr. Dalil al-Rahman, the Secretary, Chittagong Municipal Corporation whom he liked very much. After staying there for a few years, he again changed his place to a near by residence, near the Chittagong Medical College Hospital.¹ During his stay in that residence, the Shāh Ṣāḥab started coming to my residence frequently, sometime he used to come on a brand new car or by a baby Taxi and very seldom he used to talk about his eldest son, Shams-al-Karim who was then a student of degree class in the City College while I was a teacher in that College. After his movements in different places, at length he preferred to stay in the Fatima manzil at the residence of Mr. Najmul Haq Chowdhury, the present Managing Director of International bank

1. Mr. Shahab al-Din Ahmad who is a businessman in Chittagong.

terminal and there he used to stay until his death.

Till now I have given a picture as regards his (Shah Sahib) staying in different places in the city and wherever he used to stay, everybody had a free access to him and sometimes ladies were also permitted with prior permission.

His activities:- Now we would like to describe the activities of the Shah Sahib in the city. He taught to be assiduous in piety, to give up all else for Allah's sake, to turn away from the worldly vanities, to renounce pleasure, wealth and power which are the common aims of human ambition, to abandon society and to live in seclusion, a life devoted solely to the service of Allah. These were the fundamental principles of the Shah Sahib that he followed in his actions and deeds. The most important feature in his character was that he led a very unassuming life, in different to dress, leading a very simple life, looking like a very ordinary man wearing just a tunic (ganji) and lungi and canvas shoe on his feet, and moving about with a worn-out bag in hand bare-headed. This had actually befooled the people so that no one, except those who knew him closely, could believe that in him was concealed a great Sufi-saint. During his stay in the city, he was always found moving in the city either in a baby-taxi or in a car and visited the residence of people who knew him but he never asked for anything from any one. Since his appearance in the city, he made it a daily routine to go by a baby-taxi in the morning towards the remotest corner of Patenga sea beach and asked the driver not to move till his arrival. Once the driver told me after his death that

it was really surprising that after three to four hours he would appear before the taxi tired and exhausted and asked me to drive the taxi towards the city. Sometimes on way to the city he used to bring some vegetables for me and asked my wife to cook the same for me and sometimes he himself dined with me with those vegetables and had rest for a while. Such practice he continued till his death.

But at night he was also in ^{the} habit of going out either by car or by baby-taxi in the residences of some persons irrespective of class and position. He was also found to accept invitation according to his will but never yielded to pressure. On some exceptional cases he himself asked for food from particular persons whom he liked. During his night journey, sometimes he used to enter into a house where the members of the family were known to him and after some discourse, he used to come out without taking anything, most of the times such journey continued upto mid-night. Sometimes I accompanied him in such journeys. But during journey, I did never find him talking nor did I discuss anything with him. But I observed very keenly wherever he went and had his presence; he did so, either for doing good or for saving from danger and I have experienced a number of such incidents during my night journey with him. Again very often he would not have come out either at day time or at night owing to increasing number of visitors as he used to give prime consideration to religious discussion. Though he was not known to have received formal religious education, I heard him quoting profusely from the holy Qur'an and traditions of the Prophet and advised the people to act upon the Principles of Sharī'ah.

His intuitive power:- The Shah Sahib as I have seen him was a man of magnetic personality with intuitive power. It is most difficult to explain his intuitive power. Some notable persons who have deeply known him and in whose residence he used to live in, shall testify to my version.¹ He was so much alert to his intuitive power, sometimes people were defeated in order to get himself rid of Shirk and Bid'at.

His offering prayer :- The Shah Sahib was not generally seen offering prayers, but he was very particular in keeping fasts in the holy month of Ramadan. Whenever we used to visit him at the time of the prayer, he advised all of us to perform the prayer in a nearby mosque and if no mosque was available nearby, then out of the room where he lived and he himself shut the door of the house as well as the window so that none could see him from outside or peep through, and put off kax of the light within his room at once. Such custom he practised till his death. Moreover, I have always found him to advise the people to remain strict to Salat (prayer) and from the core of his heart, abhorred those who were heedless to perform prayer. He instructed those who were in close touch with him, to guide their children regarding Salat and to educate them with the principles of Islam. It is therefore, evident that a man of such nature, who instructed others to say prayers, himself said prayers. It seems that he offered prayer in seclusion. One more instance will justify the statement. Once Shah Sahib just at the time of Adhan

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- (a). Dalil al-Rahman, Secretary, Chittagong Municipal Corporation.
 - (b). Badi al-Alam, owner of Mun'em Boarding, Anderkilla, Chittagong.
 - (c). Abd al-Jalil, Collector of Taxes, Chittagong Municipal Corporation.
 - (d). Abu Taher Chowdhury, Headmaster, M.E.S. High School, Chittagong.
 - (e). Najmul-Huq Chowdhury, Managing Director, International tank terminal, Chittagong.
 - (f). Mr. Shams al-Alam, Assistant Professor of Bengali, University of Chittagong.
 - (g). Mr. Akhtar Ahmad Chowdhury, Katalganj, Chittagong.
 - (h). Mr. Ahmad Husain, Associate Professor of Bengali, Chittagong Government City College.

for Jum'a prayer, came down to my residence and asked my wife about me. She, in a humble way, replied that I would return to the residence after offering Jum'a prayer in the college mosque. Then the Shah Sahab went away from my residence without making any delay. On arrival at my residence, my wife narrated the fact; after having my lunch and without taking rest, I rushed to Shah Sahab to know if I was indeed of any service to him. To my utter surprise, the Shah Sahab started narrating about my dress that I put on during performing prayer and identified other Professors¹ who were beside me and also told that I was in the fore-front of the line (اول) and further asked me about my dress that I put on during Jum'a prayer. In reply to his queries, I humbly spoke to him that after putting off that dress I came to him to know why he enquired about me. I was in a fix about his offering prayers, and none of his close devotees could see him to say his prayers publicly. Doubts were expressed by many others about his saying prayers. A man who put so much stress on saying prayers by others, himself could not be in different towards prayers. It is felt that he did not say his prayers publicly, in order to create hatred and abhorrence towards him by the people and to remain himself in perfect concealment for fear of exposition of his ascetic attainments. A number of miracles of the Shah Sahab are narrated by his devotees. I am

myself aware of some, the more important of which are given below:

- (a). Once the Shah Sahab just after Maghrib prayer took me with him from my residence in a new car without saying anything to me and proceeded to Nasir Muhammad High School at Chandgaon and asked the
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1. Professor Siraj al-Kabir and Professor Aiyub Ali.

driver to enter into a nearby residence. At that time I did not know any member of the family¹. After our entrance into the house, the Shah Sahab laid down on a bed and kept silent for sometime and I was told to recite some verses from the holy Qur'an and explain these verses to the members of the family. Most humbly I acted upon his advice. In the meantime, I was listening to a cry of a lady at the top of her voice, scolding in a filthy language. After half an hour the Shah Sahab entered into the inner apartment of the house. The moment he entered, neither I heard the cry nor any filthy language. After a few minutes, the Shah Sahab came out from the inner apartment of the house and called a servant and gave him a hundred rupee note to purchase some meat for dwellers of the house. The members of the house tried their best to serve food to us but the Shah Sahab came out from the house and boarded the car taking me with him. During our journey neither the Shah Sahab nor I raised any word regarding the matter. Just four days after the death of the Shah Sahab, I met one of the members of the family of that house and asked him about the incident. The man in reply to my question said that one of his relations became mad and she continued her madness for thirty years. They left no stone unturned to cure her but to no effect. It was a blessing in disguise from Almighty Allah that from the very presence of the Shah Sahab his relation regained her sense and upto then (our talking) she was quite well.

(b). A similar case happened in our house. One of nephews, Hakim Munir Ahmad son of Maulana Zubair Ahmad, Head Maulana Kazem Ali High

1. The owner of the residence was late Aziz al-Rahman Chowdhury, Chittagong. He was a prominent figure in business circle. Now his sons are all well known businessmen in Chittagong.

School, had gone mad. He (the Maulānā), within his means as a teacher, did his best, going hither and thither to get his son recovered from this fatal disease but of no avail. Once I requested the Maulānā , who is my brother-in-law, to take the boy to Shāh Ṣāḥēb as the condition of the boy was going ^{from} had to worse day by day. The boy was put in chains in a naked position, but sometime, he himself unlocked the chains and used to throw stones towards family members and so to see this pitiable as well as horrific condition, all the members of the family became frightened. Hence at my own accord, as my brother-in-law till then was not aware of his (the Shāh Ṣāḥēb) lofty position because of his outward show, took the boy to Shāh Ṣāḥēb by a babi-Taxi while an unknown man was combing him (Shāh Ṣāḥēb) under a tree on an easy chair at about 4 p.m. I paid my respects and sought Do'a (blessings) for the boy. At this stage the Shāh Ṣāḥēb became a bit annoyed and started telling me that his father being a Maulānā, why did he seek the path of Shirk and Bid'at ?¹

The Shāh Ṣāḥēb then touched the face of the boy and advised me to ask his parents to refrain from doing any Shirk and Bid'at in words and actions any more. By the grace of Allah the Almighty, the boy on and from that day gradually became perfectly alright. Now the boy is serving as a lecturer in English in a local 'Alia madrasah.

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1. On this, I argued that my brother-in-law was in fact innocent and if something was done against Shariah in this regard, my sister might be responsible. On the strength of my argument, Shāh Ṣāḥēb called the boy near him and went on saying that the boy was quite alright and the Shāh Ṣāḥēb then asked a doctor who was waiting to meet the Shāh Ṣāḥēb, to apply from medicine. The name of the doctor is Md. Idris, who is at present serving in Libya in North Africa. The doctor then complied with the order of the Shāh Ṣāḥēb at once and appealed to the Shāh Ṣāḥēb that the boy had no defect but he needs his (Shāh Ṣāḥēb's) Do'a.

(c). One fine morning I went to see the Shah Sahab at the residence of Shahab al-din Ahmad and I found some people sitting before him and the Shah Sahab was discussing with them on different subjects. While the discussion was over, he, all on a sudden asked me to write an application seeking for a job/^{of lecturer} in Arabic, in the University of Chittagong. At this, I made some hesitations, on the plea that there were some rules in the University to apply for a job and I also made the Shah Sahab understand about the fact. But on his insistance and pursuance, I wrote an application with my own hand and saw the Shah Sahab on the following morning. The Shah Sahab then asked me whether I knew the residence of Dr.M.A.Ghafur, the Chairman, Deptt.of Arabic, in the University of Chittagong. I had no acquaintance with him and so far as I know, the Shah Sahab also had no acquaintance with him. In return I asked the Shah Sahab whether he knew him but I was sure that the residence of Dr.Ghafur was quite unknown to both of us. But Shah Sahab asked me to get on the baby-taxi and directed the taxi-driver to go ahead as per direction of Shah Sahab. At last we reached near a four storied building at Badurtala in the Chawkbazar area; he asked the driver to halt and asked me to see whether Dr.Ghafur resides in the first floor. To my utter surprise, after pushing a calling bell, a baby came out and I asked the baby whether Dr.Ghafur was in that flat. The baby replied me in the affirmative and within a few minutes, Dr.Ghafur also came out from the room and shook hands with me and there I told him that a Shah Sahab was waiting for him in the baby taxi. Dr.Ghafur came down from the floor to welcome the Shah Sahab. After shaking hands,

Dr. Ghafur tried to take him to his flat but the Shah Sahib, instead of going up, handed over my application to him and obtained an assurance of my appointment at the very first chance and with these few words the Shah Sahib left his residence taking me to Shah Sahib's place.

(d). Once my friend Abu Taher, Headmaster, M.E.S. High School told me that once a few days before the festival 'Eid-al-Adha, he asked one of his friends to give him some loan to celebrate 'Eid al-Adha and accordingly his friend assured him the loan. But the day of 'Eid al-Adha came near, no where his friend was traceable. He became extremely anxious, and one day before the festival, Abu Taher went to the Shah Sahib with a gloomy face. The Shah Sahib enquired about his gloomy face and he narrated the cause of his anxiety, where upon the Shah Sahib consoled him saying "এখন যাও এবং দেখো হয়ত কোন আল্লাহর বান্দাহ তোমাকে টাকা দিতে পারে"।

Tran :- (Now you go and see that any one of Allah's servants might give you the money). After that Abu Taher returned to his residence and in the afternoon some one was knocking at the door. Abu Taher, as he described to me, thought that his friend might have come with the money assured to him and with this hope, he opened the door but he found at the door another man who knew him from before. The man told him that he came to the city to deposit money in the bank but the bank became closed before his arrival. Therefore, he requested him (Abu Taher) to keep the money with him and also permitted him to spend out of that as much as he required. With this utterance of the man, Abu Taher became overjoyed and thought that this was the Karamat of the Shah Sahib.

(e). Once Rabiul Husain alias Manju in whose residence the Shah Sahab used to stay for some time,¹ told me that he came out successful in the written test Examination held for recruitment in the Pakistan Air Force during Pakistan period. When he was called to appear before the I.S.S.B. for final selection and medical test, he sought permission from the Shah Sahab. The latter disagreed and withheld permission. But this could not stop Manju from going to Dhaka to appear for tests. Incidentally Shah Sahab also went to Dhaka at that time; when they met there, on enquiry of the Shah Sahab, Manju told him that he did well in the tests. The Shah Sahab without saying anything, bade him good bye and disappeared. But it is a fact that on the same day and at the same time the Shah Sahab was physically present in Chittagong, many people testified to the fact that they met the Shah Sahab at his residence in the city. On arrival from Dhaka, Manju told publicly of his meeting with the Shah Sahab near the ^{Fazlul} ~~Fazlul~~ Haq Hall, Dhaka. Being aware of this incident, the Shah Sahab severed his connection with Manju till a few months before his death.² One day it so happened that while I was returning home from the College to have my lunch, Manju also accompanied me. On reaching home, I found the Shah Sahab was sitting in my drawing room and waiting for my arrival. But as soon as his eyes fell on Manju who was following me, he became furious and with great difficulty I could make him cool.

1. During the time of Pakistan period.

2. While Manju came to know that Shah Sahab developed a soft corner for me, Manju, I being one of his teachers, caught hold of me to take him to Shah Sahab to beg of his pardon for disclosing his miracle to the people. It should be noted here that Manju cut a sorry figure in the examination.

The Shah Sahab ordered me to perform my Zohar (mid-day prayer) prayer. After performing my prayer, I sought his permission to serve food and he kindly agreed. Then we three had our meal and offered dua for Manju for his marriage and future progress. So far I knew Manju married and went to U.S.A. with service and now he is doing his M.B.A. there. He wrote several letters from there which are still lying with me.

(f). One more miracle was narrated to me by his Khādim,¹ who was a constant attendant to the Shah Sahab. Once in his (Shah Sahab) mid-night journey at about 2 p.m. his car was stopped by a man wearing red turban and showing proper respect to Shah Sahab, he started cleaning the car with his turban. The Shah Sahab did not look at the man till the cleaning was over, but when the car was about to take a start, the Shah Sahab gave the man something. The driver of the car, asked the Shah Sahab, while he was getting down at the residence of Shahab-al-din Ahmad about the mystery of cleaning the car by the red turbaned man and enquired of his identity. In reply to the question, the Shah Sahab took an oath of assurance from the driver not to disclose the matter till his death and having such assurance, the Shah Sahab simply told the driver that he was the Qutb of the city, who out of his impassionate love and affection cleaned the car and ^{he} showered his blessings to this Faqir (Shah Sahab). This is in fact a rare quality of a higher position of a super man and Allah knows best about the spiritual ascendancy of the Shah Sahab.

1. His name is Zarip Ali, who is now serving as a Peon in the International Tank Terminal, Gupta Khal, Chittagong.

His death:- It is said that most of his devotees heard him say now and then to recite the verse of the holy Qurān :

ما ذا جاء اجلهم لا يتأخرون ساعة ولا يستقدمون

Tran:- So when their doom comes, they are not able to delay, (it) an hour, nor can they advance (it).¹

Once in the first half of the month of Sh'abān he told me in a casual manner that most probably he would miss the holy days ahead but suddenly he became evasive and dropped the discussion. However, while death came near, he brought his wife from his village home through his eldest son to Fatima Manzil, where he breathed his last. A few days before his death the Shāh Ṣāḥib made an wasiyatnāma, as described by his wife, ^{and} advised his second son² that his funeral prayer should be led either by his Pīr late Muftī Faīd Allāh (R.A.) (who was then alive) or by Sayyid 'Abd al-Aḥad al-Madānī, the Imām of the Jām-i-mosque, Anderkilla, Chittagong and to bury him in his family grave-yard, at his village home Madarsha. Hence this mighty soul left the world for good on the 23rd of August, Monday at 9 P.M. in A.D.1976 corresponding to 26th of Shābān in A.H.1397, leaving a large number of his adherents in mourning. His funeral prayer was led by Sayyid 'Abd al-Aḥad al-Madānī and he was buried in his family grave yard.

He left behind his widow who is still alive, four sons and four daughters. His own brother Professor Ahmad Husain and his youngest brother who is in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia are alive. All his four

1. S. XVI, V, 61.

2. The name of the second son is Nur al-Karīm, who is at present serving as Lecturer in English in the Dammam College, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

sens are well-established and well placed and all daughters are married to suitable places.

His mazar:- His mazar is in North Madarsha, P.S.Hathazari, Chittagong. It is two hundred yards away from the eastern side of his residence and is surrounded by four walls. At the southern side of the mazar, there is a big tank and the northern side of the mazar is a vast agricultural land. The west and the east portions are covered by a thickly populated area.

Fateha Khwani:- A yearly Fateha Khwani is held to commemorate his death on the 26th of Shaban at the residence of Mr. Akhtar Ahmad Chowdhury, at Katalganj, Chittagong. People and devotees attend the Fateha Khwani. Recitation from the holy Qur'an begins after the Zuhar prayer and Milad Mahfil is held after 'Asar prayer. After Maghrib prayer a general feast is held to feed the poor and the people attend the Fateha Khwani from every nook and corner of Chittagong and a similar Fateha Khwani is also held at his home village in the same manner.

Appendix (A)

His Khalifas :- Amongst numerous Khalifas (spiritual students having sanad) of the Maulana, ^(Shah Ahmad Allah) some distinguished names are listed below :- ¹

- (1). Maulana Shah Sufi Wasī al-Rahman, Bealkhali, Chittagong.
- (2). Maulvi Amir al-Zaman, Patiya, Chittagong.
- (3). Maulana Amin al-Haq, Harbangiri, Chittagong.
- (4). Maulvi 'Abdal-Razzaq, nick name----Hakim Shah, Sat Baria, Chittagong.
- (5). Maulana 'Abdal-Aziz Mandal, Burma.
- (6). Maulana 'Abd al-Rahman, Kanchanpur, Chittagong.
- (7). Maulana 'Abdal-Aziz, Neakhali.
- (8). Sayyid Tafadhal Husain, Mirzapur, Chittagong.
- (9). Mufti Sayyid Amin al-Haq, Farhadabad, Chittagong.
- (10). Maulana Shah Sufi Yakub 'Ali, Sreepur, Neakhali.
- (11). 'Ibad Allah Shah, Chakaria, Chittagong.
- (12). Bachamian Faqir, Kawkhali, Chittagong.
- (13). Maulana Yakub Nuri, Neakhali.
- (14). 'Abd al-Ghafur, nick name, Kabuli Shah Faridpur.
- (15). Sayyid Faizal-Haq, (Fani Billah), Maulana's own son.
- (16). Maulana Shah Sufi Amin al-Haq (Maulana's own nephew).
- (17). Sayyid Ghulam al-Rahman, (Maulana's own nephew).
- (18). Shah Wali Mastan, Hill Tracts, Chittagong.
- (19). Shah Nazir Shah, Station Road, Chittagong.
- (20). Jafar Ahmad, nick name Mannu Faqir, Burma.

1. Maulana Delwar Husain, Jibani 'O' Karamat, pp.94-97.

- (21). Maulana Sayyid 'Abd al-Majid, Azim Nagar, Chittagong.
 - (22). Maulvi Ghulam al-Rahman, Faridpur.
 - (23). Maulana Sayyid 'Abd al-Hadi, Kanchanpur, Chittagong.
 - (24). Qadi Asad Allah, Ahallah Mouza, Chittagong.
 - (25). Sayyid Yusuf 'Ali, Hawla, Chittagong.
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Appendix (B)

(Remarks of the same
foreigners Appendix-B).

The former District Magistrate
Mr. Macanangi, C.S.P., along with
three respectable persons visited the mazar of the Maulana at
Maizbhandar to gather informations of Maizbhandar and they took
three snaps of the Jum'a prayer and also of scenical view of the
'Urs' from different places. After that they had talks with Maulana
Delwar Husain, the grand son of the Maulana at his common room
where the visitors observed "We have heard adverse criticism
regarding Maizbhandar but now what we have witnessed physically,
We have known Maizbhandar is everything. We have come through our
mission to visit Maizbhandar in Pakistan (presently Bangladesh)
and Ajmir in India to assess the correct information. We hope we
shall be able to place a true picture of both the places and the
interested people will be able to remove their misconception after
our reporting to them,¹ Again in A.D. 1959, January 23rd, another
American citizen, Rober W. Fowler, J.C.A. Agriculture adviser, visited
the Shrine of the Maulana and passed the following remarks:-

" I am extremely happy to have been a guest in the home
of the religious leader and to view the activities of a great
festival as is taking place, we are appreciative of your wonderful
hospitality.² "

Sd/- Rober W. Fowler,
J.C.A. Agriculture adviser.
23.1.1959.

1. Wilayat-i-Muttaga, Introduction, p. II.

2. Ibid, p. III.

CHAPTER - VIII

Conclusion

The saints and shrines of Chittagong have become an integral part of the social and cultural life of the area. As far as could be gathered, the earliest Sufis of Chittagong, were those who are generally called Bāra Auliya or Twelve saints. We have not been able to find out the name of all twelve saints, in fact no such list exists these days anywhere in the written sources, but we have discussed about some of them whose names are available and whose shrines are still objects of veneration to the local people.

Of the Bāra Auliya, Badar Shāh is undoubtedly the most prominent. His shrine is situated in the heart of the City of Chittagong. His name has been imprinted in the mind of the people; the sailors, the boatmen and the players still remember him while initiating their journeys or starting their games. The Badar Muqams situated in the various parts of the Sea-coast also commemorate his advent in mute voice. Though the place of birth of these early Sufis can not be satisfactorily established, it seems that the tradition connects them with Arabia; in any case they seem to have come to Chittagong by sea-route, in contradistinction to the early Sufis of Gaud and Pandua¹, who came by land-route. The Arab contact with Chittagong in the early period of history also probably suggests influx of Arab Sufis and saints to Chittagong.

The Chief contribution of the Bāra Auliya in Chittagong is the spread of Islam in the area. Tradition also credits them for

1. Discussed in Chapter-II.

the conquest of Chittagong by the Muslims; but history tells us that the reigning Muslim king of Sonargāon, Fakhral-dīn Mubārak-Shāh conquered Chittagong for the Muslims. We have, therefore, shown that the conquest of Chittagong by the Muslims was a result of simultaneous efforts of the King and the Ṣūfīs. Whether the Ṣūfīs came early and the rulers came to their help or the rulers came early and the Ṣūfīs collaborated with the rulers cannot be determined now. It may only be conjectured.

After spread of Islam more Ṣūfīs flourished in Chittagong; infact, Ṣūfī-ism became a living movement in the area and it is still a living force. The names of Ṣūfīs in the 15th and 16th countries are not many; it may be that we have not been able to find out traditions about more of them. Of those whose names are available, Shāikh Bāyazīd and Shāikh Farīd are prominent. We have given an altogether different interpretation about Shāikh Bāyazīd and we have come to the conclusion that Shāikh Bāyazīd is not to be identified with Sultān al-ʿArefīn Shāikh Bāyazīd of Bīstāmī. The latter named renowned Iranian Ṣūfī is not known to have ever visited this part of the world. Shāikh Farīd also seems to be a local saint and we have disproved the earlier theory that he is to be identified with Shāikh Farīd Shakarganj of Pāk-Patāṇ, India. The 17th century Ṣūfīs, Shah Gharīb Allāh and Shāh Mulla Miskīn are also very prominent : with the help of newly discovered reliable sources, we have proved their histriocity. From the 18th Century onwards also, Ṣūfīs exerted a great influence and names of a larger number of Ṣūfīs are available.

Their teachings and exploits are known from comparatively reliable written sources. Their shrines still attract visitors and devotees. Of these the dargāh of Shāh Amānat in the city, and the Dargāh of Shāh Ahmad Allāh and his nephew Shāh Ghulām al-Rahmān at Māizbhāndār have attained great prominence.

Influence of Sūfīs on the Society.

The Sūfīs influenced the society to a great extent in their life time and now after their death; their shrines are influencing the society in the same way. The influence of Sūfī-ism is so great that, in the city of Chittagong, there are more than one hundred dargāhs of Sūfīs. History of many of them is lost, but their shrines are visited by the people. On important festival nights, such as those of Shab-i-Barāt, Shab-i-Qadr, the people of Chittagong, generally go to the dargāhs of Sūfīs to offer Ziārat and invoke their blessings. The more enthusiastic ones try to cover all the dargāhs within the night but they can hardly finish their job, visiting all the dargāhs from Bahaddar hat to Halishahar, east to west, and from Nasirabād to the ~~six~~ port area, north to south. Not to speak of the city, the dargāh of some or the other sūfīs is found in most of the villages of the district. It seems that after coming to Chittagong, Badar Shāh and Qattāl Shāh remained in the city, while others spread over the outlying areas. That is why, we find the dargāh of Shāh Muhsin Aūlyā at a distant village. Moreover, in some other villages also, there may be found the dargāh of Bāra Aūlyā; People do not know who is lying buried

there but they call them Bara-Auliya Dargah. I have inspected several of them, in some places, there is no grave, but simply a construction, which the people repair year to year and they make offerings there on particular day of the year, which they call 'Urs ceremony. Such is the influence of Bara Auliya that the credulous people venerate the places even though there is no grave.

In the city of Chittagong several shrines are extremely popular. There are the Dargāhs of Shāh Badar, Shāh Amānat, Shāh Gharīb Allāh, Shāh Miskīn and Shāh Bāyazīd.- Hundreds of people visit the dargāhs daily; on a particular day of the week, such as Thursday evenings, the dargāhs look like a bazar and on the days of the 'Urs ceremonies, people throng there in such large numbers that even the roads and streets leading to the dargāh need to be closed for traffic. The people go there with various kinds of animals for sacrifice, they pay liberally to the dargāh and offer Fātiḥa invoking blessings. The animals are sacrificed and the people attending the 'Urs and the poor and destitutes who gather there are fed with these offerings. The excess of the animals and other offerings are some times sold out to swell the dargāh funds, which are appropriated by the dargāh committees for the development of amenities in the dargāh. Where there is no committee, but Khādims or Mutawallies, they appropriate the funds both for the developments of the dargāh and for themselves. Of these Principal Sūfīs of the city, Shāh Badar is always held in high esteem being the guardian saint, Amānat Shāh is especially venerated by

those who are involved in litigations, Gharib Allāh Shāh by those who wish to be cured of diseases and Shāh Miskīn by those who wish to acquire knowledge, particularly by the students.¹

Among the dargāh lying outside the Chittagong city, those of Shah Muhsin Auliya and Maizbhandar Sharif are very popular. Shah Muhsin Auliya is reckoned to be one of the Bara Auliya. Maizbhandar has attained world-wide fame, the followers of the Maizbhandar Tariqah in Chittagong are numerous. There is hardly any village in Chittagong where followers of this Tariqah are not found. The Sinamajlis in imitation of those held in the dargāh of Shah Ghulam al-Rahman of Maizbhandar, are also held in many places. These are arranged by his disciples, often his Khalifas. For about a month earlier than 9th Magh and 22nd Chaitra of the Bengali year, (the days of the death anniversary of Shah Ahmad Allah and Shah Ghulam al-Rahman respectively) it is a common scene in Chittagong - Hathazari Road where Cattle such as buffaloes, cows, goats etc. each garlanded and each followed by drum-beating and dancing of people, are taken to Maizbhandar. On these occasions special trains and buses need to be provided for carrying the hundreds of devotees. The entire area surrounding the village of Maizbhandar with a radius of 3/5 miles become so much crowded that people can hardly move. Vendors open shops to sell various commodities including food, medicine etc. For some days it takes the look of a township. Special arrangements need to be made for sanitary and hygienic purposes. Apart from these observing these two days, there are also

1. Abdul-Huq Chowdhury: Shahar Chattagrammer Itikatha, pp. 185-191.

held the birth anniversary of the two great saints (which are called Khoshroz Sharif) and the birth and death anniversaries of sons and grand sons of the two great saints. In fact, there is hardly any month of the year, when one or the other anniversaries are not held. There are not observed in such grand scale as the two death anniversaries of 10th Magh and 22nd Chaitra, but in those days also considerable number of devotees take part.

Now are all these done by the people for nothing ?

Certainly the people attain their wishes by invoking the blessing of the Sufis. Some of the Karamats or miracles of some of the sufis have already been discussed. Except for a few English educated people and Orthodox Ulama, there is hardly any person in Chittagong, who are not influenced by one or the other Sufi or who does not visit the prominent darghas of Chittagong. Such is the great influence exerted by the Sufis.

Did the Sufis of Chittagong convert the people to Islam ?

We have not found any evidence about converting the people by the Sufis. About the early sufis, whose names have come to us only through traditions, nothing definite is known. Badar Shah and his associates are traditionally known to have preached Islam. Shah Muhsin Auliya is known to have cured a dumb boy by his miracle, but he is also not known to have engaged himself in conversion. The Bera community to which the boy belonged, still have the privilege of roofing the saints dargah, but they profess their own faith. Sufis about whom reliable

evidence are available, are also not known to have made any conversion. I know of an episode about conversion. One Hindu driver of a private car while carrying a passenger became surprised to see a miracle of his passenger. The passenger was no other than Shah Fadl al-Karim about whom I have discussed in a previous chapter. The driver was so much influenced that he offered to be a Muslim in the hands of the Shah Sahib, but the latter refused to convert him. On another occasion, the Shah Sahib said in course of his private talks with some of his admirers ~~said~~ that no one should convert a non-Muslim by showing miracle, lest the converted Muslim may commit Shirk (association with Allah). Because the converted fellow will be more attached to the saint than to Allah. It seems that this is the reason why the sufis were not in favour of conversion. But they, by the very strength of their character, their aversion to wealth and worldly things, attracted the people towards them and towards the faith they professed. The dargahs of Sufis are venerated by the non-Muslims as well. As the sufis made no distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims in their life time, the people also irrespective of their religious faith, are attracted to the dargahs of the sufis.

The way the people are attracted to the sufis and their shrines, is a sufficient proof to their influence over the society. ^{The popular}
^{belief is that}
As they helped the people in their life time by their Dua (blessings), in getting relief from worries and anxieties, wounds and dangers,

they are also doing the same kind of services to the people after their death. Apart from other things, it is a common scene in all dargahs that beggars and destitutes ^{throng} there with begging bowl and stretching hands. Some of them make the dargahs their permanent home. They never go unfed, because they get the share of sacrificial food that the devotees offer. This, I think, is the greatest influence of the sufis on the society and also an important example of their miracle.

May Allah grant the sufis peace in their eternal rest and save the devotees from Shirk and Bid'at.

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2. Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Patrika, Vol. 54, Nos. I
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প্রাক্তন ড. আবদুল করিম প্রদত্ত।

so they fled far and wide. Chittagong thus came under the influence of Islam and it was Badar Shah who is credited to do this job for Islam. The people of Chittagong accepted Islam in his hands. People believe that the name Chatigaon has been originated from the 'Chati' of Badar Shah. He is lying buried on a hillock in an enclosure surrounded by pucca walls and roofed over by a large dome. At present the surrounding walls are all ruined, but the remaining portion suggests that the mausoleum was built during the sultanate period.¹ The mazar was built just after the death of Pīr Badar. In one side of the shrine, an Arabic inscription is attached fixed in the wall but it has become quite unreadable due to excessive white washing over the inscription tablet. Even then there are many other instances which testify that the Mazar of Pīr Badar is an old one. The Mughal historian of the 17th century, Shihāb al-dīn Ahmad Talish in his 'Fatḥiyyā-i-Ibariā' writes, 'There is a Mazar of Pīr Badar on the hillock of a fort. The Khādims perform their prayer, fasting. The Magh Administrators, in order to protect the shrine, have given in Waqf some villages. On being present at the shrine, they used to offer reverence and Charity'.² The word fort means here Andarkillah, because at that time, the Maghs had their forts surrounded by the hillocks. Hence on the testimony of Shihāb al-dīn Talish it appears that till even the middle of the 17th century the Mazar of Pīr Badar existed.

In Chittagong, the influence of Pīr Badar is above question. Every year on the 29th of Ramadan, his annual Urs is celebrated at his

1. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, vol.VII, No.1, 1961, p.39.

2. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, vol.VII, No.1, p.39.

'Urs ceremony : The 'Urs ceremony of this saint is held every year on the 11th of Shabān in a befitting manner. The waqf committee of this dargah, with the help of the local people manage the entire show with utmost care and due solemnity. People, irrespective of caste and creed attend the 'Urs with profound respect and due honour to the saint's mazar. The attendance of the people, as has been observed, was composed of people from every nook and corner of the country. During the 'Urs the area turns into a new look through illumination, banners and festoons. Mahfil-i-Milād is also held in the mosque which is adjacent to the Mazar. Dhikr goes on throughout night. Sima, Qawwālī in Urdu and in Bengali languages are also held at the foot of the Mazar. From the Sima, it may be supposed that Shah Bayazid belonged to the Chishtiya Silsilah. People of all shades listen to it with rapt attention. Different animals namely cow, Buffalow, goat, deer etc. are sacrificed in honour of the saint during the 'Urs and this grand feast is supplied to all where no discrimination is found between high and low, poor and rich. The Waqf Committee deserves full right to control such a huge gathering.

2. Hadrat Shaikh Farid (R.A.)

A famous fountain is situated beside a hillock at Shola Shahar at a distance of about one mile north of Chittagong City and just by the side of the Shola Shahar Railway Junction. The fountain is called 'Shaikh Farider Chashma' (The fountain of

Shaikh Farid). People drink its water with great respect and veneration as they think the water is a good healer of wounds and diseases.

Regarding Shaikh Farid, there is a tradition which is still current in Chittagong. The tradition runs thus.¹ Shaikh Farid lost his father in his infancy and was brought up under the care of his mother, who was extremely God-fearing and religious. His mother spared no pains to educate her son and to give him a perfect religious training. After studying for a period of twelve years in different branches of learning, Farid became a profound scholar and he became proud of his scholastic attainments. One day, while he was engaged in conversation with his mother, his pious mother became a bit annoyed with him for his pride in 'Ilm-i-Zahiri or worldly learning, and advised him to achieve perfection in 'Ilm-i-Batini or divine knowledge. The pious lady was of opinion that unless her son acquires the divine knowledge, his worldly learning was of no use. Shaikh Farid was very much affectionate to his mother, he was moved by the advice of his mother and he left home and took shelter in forest and engaged himself in meditation together spiritual knowledge as desired by his mother. After twelve years, he knocked at his mother's door and asked her to receive him. He was given a cold reception by his mother, who mildly advised him to attain further perfection which was yet to be earned. The Shaikh again went to the forest, spent another twelve years in meditation and ascetic practices. After the expiry of this period,

1. Enzumul Haq : A History of Sufi-ism in Bengal, p.240.

Shāfi Shāh alias Badnā Shāh to Jail on the false allegation that through this type of people, the English would have faced problems in establishing independent rule here. As will be seen later in this chapter, Shāfi Shāh died in Jail.¹ On the very day of his death Shāh Amānat felt in his pulse the necessity of his arrival in Chittagong and saw through his spiritual vision that the Wilāyat (spiritual seat) had been left vacant in Chittagong, and he ought to have taken the charge of the Wilāyat personally and he at once left for Chittagong.² On reaching Chittagong he began to lead a very ordinary and unostentatious life so that people could not recognise his spiritual might. He kept himself aloof and took an ordinary service in the office of the Judges' court, Chittagong. People used to call him Khān Sāheb or Mian Sāheb or Mian Sāheb. During that time the country was under the British rule and as a result the Muslims were living miserable life being put to economic hardship. However, somehow or other, Shāh Amānat accepted this ordinary job to meet the necessity of his daily life and also kept himself engaged in mystic accomplishment. In A.D.1666, Chittagong was conquered by Nawwāb Shaista Khān and his son Bujurg Umed Khān became the first Mughal faujdar of Chittagong and he built the present Jame-mosque, situated in Ander Killah, Chittagong.³ But during the British rule the mosque lost its identity and the British made it a store house of arms and ammunitions.⁴ The prominent people of the city said their

1. Maḥbubul 'Alam : Hadrat Sūfī Amānat Khān, p.5.

2. Ibid.

3. J.N.Sarkar ed. History of Bengal, vol.II, pp.380-893; Riad al-Salatin, Eng.tr.Abdus Salam, p.28, note, 3, Shams-ud-din Ahmed: Inscriptions of Bengal, vol.IV, pp.285-87.

4. Hamid Aliyah Khān : Aḥadīth al-Khwanīn, p.318.

Abd al-Wahhāb ibn-i-Kshā m'adi. Hijri 1222/ A.D.1807."

Being puffed up by his vast wealth the pleader 'Abd al-Wahhāb (at that time the pleaders were called Munshī) made up his mind to arrange a Torabandi feast¹ and expressed his desire to Shāh Amānat. But Shāh - Amānat advised him to arrange general feast where a large number of people could be accommodated instead of a Torabandi feast which was very difficult to make proper arrangement. 'Abd al-Wahhāb replied that he would feed the people equally and then there will be no distinction among the invitees. The Shāh accepted the invitation reluctantly. 'Abd - al-Wahhāb arranged the feast in due time. On the fixed date a special seating arrangement was made for Shāh Amānat. Every one was waiting for Shāh Amānat's arrival but in the meantime an old man with torn and shabby clothes came and seated himself on the special seat arranged for Shāh Amānat. When it was brought to the notice of the host, he drove the stranger away using filthy words. In fact, the man was Shāh Amānat; he went there to see for himself in disguise whether the invitees in the feast were given equal treatment and the people saw him (Shāh Amānat) coming out. The people waiting out side, thought that Shāh Amānat was going out after taking his meal. At once the miraculous news was brought to the notice of the host; he at once rushed to find out the Shāh but

1. Nowadays this sort of feast is not found. It seems it is a great feast. Tora is derived from the word Torah means to line up i.e. where a large number of people take their meal in the line. The above explanation is given by Dr.A.Karim in his book 'Shāh Sufi Amānat' (R.A.), p.44. I have heard from some old people that they heard from their fore-fathers about the Torabandi Khāna a feast thrown by very rich people. In this feast the invitees were seated in groups and each group was given separate sets of dishes and in this no distinction was made.

Danish Pandit has also been mentioned by poet Muhammad Muqim. Danish Pandit (also known as Danish Qādi) was a friend of the poet. Muhammad Muqim used to visit the Pandit in his house at Suluk Bahr, and used to discuss with him various problems,² probably relating to literary matters. Although contemporary, the poet refers to Danish Pandit in polite and respectful words, thus showing that Danish Pandit was senior to him in age.³ Hamid Allah Khan's testimony shows that Danish Pandit was also an author of several books. So, he seems to have been senior to the poet Muhammad Muqim in learning also. If Muhammad Muqim lived at least upto 1827 A.D. his senior contemporary Danish Pandit lived towards the beginning of the 19th century. Shafi Shah who was also a contemporary of Danish Pandit also must have been living towards the beginning of the 19th century. Shafi Shah must have pre-deceased Danish Pandit, because Hamid Allah Khan has narrated Danish Pandit's reminiscences of Shafi Shah. It will not, therefore, be unreasonable to suggest that Shafi Shah died (or was put to death by the English Government) during the first few years of the 19th century.

Mahbub al-Alam says, after the death of Shafi Shah alias Badna Shah in the prison of the English Government, the Wilayat (spiritual leadership) of Chittagong fell vacant and Shah Amanat, who was in Bihar, came to Chittagong and occupied the seat.⁴ The learned

1. Muhammad Enamul Huq thought that the poet wrote his book in 1773 A.D. and so he was of the opinion that the poet and Danish Pandit were living in the 18th century (Muhammad Enamul Huq: Muslim Bangla Sahitya, p.287) but recently Abdul Karim has shown that Muhammad Muqim wrote his book in 1827 A.D. (Bangla Academy Patrika), Baisakh-Ashad 1390, B.S., pp.85-87.

2. See note-I, p.104.

3. Bangla Academy Patrika, Baisakh-----Ashad, 1390 B.S., pp.108, 115.

4. Mahbub Al-Alam: Chattagramer Itihas (Hadrat Shah Sufi Amanat Khan), pp.1-2.